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THE REFERENCE SHELF

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Volume IV

Number 5

FEDERAL DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

Compiled by  
JULIA E. JOHNSON

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## INTRODUCTION

Pressure upon Congress has been increasing steadily for the last several years for the passage of a bill establishing a Federal department of education with a secretary in the President's Cabinet. In the 69th Congress the Curtis-Reed bill S. 291 and H.R. 5000, and the Means bill S. 2841 were under discussion, and joint Congressional hearings were held by the Senate and House Committees on Education but no action was taken. Prior to these bills there were a series of educational bills in Congress extending back into 1918 and earlier, aiming to give the Federal government a larger degree of participation in education. The immediate cause of the recent quickened interest were disclosures made during the World War pointing to widespread illiteracy and grave shortcomings in our public educational system.

In earlier bills a provision on which much stress was laid was that of Federal aid to education patterned after the plan previously adopted toward agriculture. Strenuous opposition developed to this proposal by reason of what was felt to be the danger of Federal control, and in the new bill this much debated provision was omitted and advocates centered their demands upon the features most widely accepted, a Federal department of education with a secretary in the Cabinet; the main functions of the proposed department to be those of research and fact-finding.

Reference Shelf, Volume 1, Number 5 on the Towner-Sterling Bill, first published in December 1922, revised edition printed in April 1924, deals with earlier material on the subject of a Federal department of education and includes discussion of the proposal for Federal aid. The present number of the Reference Shelf is supple-

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mentary to the above, and includes references and material appearing mainly since the latter date with special emphasis upon a department of education and a secretary in the Cabinet. A brief is included.

JULIA E. JOHNSON

October 21, 1926

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## BRIEF

RESOLVED: *That Congress should authorize the establishment of a Federal department of education with a secretary in the Cabinet.*

### AFFIRMATIVE

- I. A Federal department of education should be established.
  - A. Grave shortcomings have come to light in our educational system.
    1. A serious percentage of illiteracy was disclosed by the late war and by the census.
    2. Many communities are backward in education.
    3. There is inadequate training of many teachers.
    4. Our system has been inadequate to cope with the problems of immigrant and adult education.
  - B. Education should be more prominently represented in the national government.
    1. It is one of the fundamental national interests.
      - a. It affects all the people.
      - b. It is essential to national life and welfare.
    2. Other nations have ministers of education.
  - C. The Bureau of Education has not been adequate to deal with educational shortcomings and defects.
    1. It has been too small and lacked authority and funds.

- a. It has been submerged in the Department of the Interior.
  - 2. To expand it would not be sufficient.
    - a. The present agencies dealing with education could not be coordinated in a bureau.
    - b. It is doubtful if it could command resources.
  - D. A department of education is widely advocated.
    - 1. It is sponsored by the National Education Association and supported by a majority of those engaged in public education, by many national organizations, etc.
    - 2. Opposition is largely from private and parochial schools, privately endowed institutions, etc.
- II. A department of education would be desirable.
  - A. It would tend to correct the shortcomings and defects of our educational system.
    - 1. Provide a clearing house for the study of education.
      - a. Place the results of investigation at the disposal of all.
      - b. Throw light on the many problems of which study is needed.
        - (1) Rural, elementary, secondary, and professional schools, physical education, the handicapped, teachers, adults, immigrants, etc.
        - (2) Communities or other agencies have not the resources to make these studies.
    - 2. Tend to equalize education.
    - 3. Prevent waste.
      - a. Promote wiser expenditures.
        - (1) In administration, building, etc.



- 1). Prevent waste of children through lack of promotion, etc.
    - 4. Stimulate the development of education.
      - a. By the dissemination of knowledge concerning the best practices.
  - B. It would coordinate and unify the work of the Federal government for education.
    - 1. The activities of the government touching upon education are scattered.
      - a. About forty departments have educational activities of one kind or another.
    - 2. The department of education would unify some of the activities now represented in separate departments.
    - 3. A Federal council of education composed of heads of the several executive departments would provide practical coordination for other activities.
    - 4. A department of education would promote economy and efficiency in these activities of the government.
      - a. It would eliminate duplication and secure unity of plan and purpose.
  - C. A department of education would give dignity, prestige, and leadership to education before the nation.
    - 1. Lift education out of its subordinate position.
    - 2. A spokesman in the Cabinet would be influential in
      - a. Securing adequate support.
      - b. Securing better development of policy.
        - (1) He could counsel directly with head of the nation.

- c. Giving enhanced prestige among the public to findings.
    - d. In international relations.
  - D. Objections are not well-founded.
    - 1. A department of education would not involve political control, bureaucracy, etc.
    - 2. It would not lead to constant change in educational policy.
      - a. The subordinates would maintain a fairly continuous policy.
    - 3. It would not involve standardization of education.
- III. A department of education would be sound and practicable.
  - A. It would not be unduly expensive.
    - 1. It would cost but \$1,500,000.
      - a. This is small compared to total expenditures for education throughout the country.
      - b. It is small compared to savings that would be effected in the nation.
    - 2. It would not involve the nation in further Federal support of schools.
      - a. This is a separate question.
  - B. It would be constitutional.
    - 1. It does not contain any features in conflict with states rights.
  - C. It is based on precedent.
    - 1. The Federal government is already carrying on extensive work touching upon education.
      - a. Under the Bureau of Education.
      - b. In the educational activities in various departments.
    - 2. It has often aided education in the past.
      - a. In grants and gifts to states, etc.

- D. It would maintain and extend relations now existing between states and nation in relation to education.
  - 1. Extension of cooperation would result from the merits of the service.

### NEGATIVE

- I. A Federal department of education is unnecessary.
  - A. There is no need for a department of education.
    - 1. Federal participation in education is provided for sufficiently by a Bureau of Education.
      - a. It can perform all necessary functions.
      - b. It can be expanded.
        - (1) This would give all the advantages accruing from a department of education, without the disadvantages.
    - 2. It would be inadvisable to create an additional department of government.
      - a. There are too many Federal departments already.
        - (1) The tendency is to reduce the branches of the government.
      - b. It could not easily be given up when once adopted.
    - 3. It is pure theory that a Federal department would be able to meet educational needs better than states and localities.
  - B. There is no crisis in education.
    - 1. Illiteracy is decreasing.
      - a. The census showed a drop from 7.7 in 1910 to 6.0 in 1920 in the percentage of illiteracy.
    - 2. Education is advancing.

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- a. Adequate progress is being made in education and in the support of education.
    - (1) There was an increase of nearly 50 per cent in expenditures between 1920 and 1922.
  - b. Conditions during the war were unusual.
  - C. The need of a secretary of education is not established.
    - 1. Practically the same authority as he would have now rests with the commissioner of education.
    - 2. We have forty-eight ministers of education in the separate states.
  - D. There is no real demand for a department of education.
    - 1. It is demanded only by a small group of school officials.
  - E. No serious reason can be brought to justify the proposed department.
- II. A department of education would be undesirable.
- A. It would be an objectionable extension of Federal power to matters that should be under the authority of the individual states.
    - 1. It would tend toward Federal control of education.
      - a. The true purpose of bills to establish a department of education is the same as that of older bills.
    - 2. It would be an entering wedge for further usurpations belonging to the state.
    - 3. The public schools must be kept under state and local administration and supervision.

B. A Cabinet position would be no specific advantage and would bring education into politics.

1. A secretary would be appointed by the President to reflect the views of the party in power.
2. It would interfere with continuity of policy in the department.
  - a. The tenure of a department head is more uncertain than of a bureau.
    - (1) The average tenure of the head of the Department of the Interior has been two years and nine months; the average tenure of the head of the Bureau of Education has been nine years.
3. There would be danger of illiberalism, reactionary policy, etc.

It would be hostile to the highest interests of education.

1. Hamper the freedom of education.
  - a. Lead to uniformity and standardizing of educational ideas.
    - (1) Institutions not conforming would be marked.
  - b. Education is essentially an experiment.
2. Would be dangerous to our liberties.
3. Would jeopardize the maintenance of religious educational institutions.
  - a. They might eventually come under bureaucratic control.

III. The proposed department of education would be unsound and impracticable.

A. It would be needlessly expensive.

1. The initial expense would be \$1,500,000 a year.

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- a. Once established larger and larger appropriations will be demanded.
  - (1) Federal appropriations have a tendency to grow.
    - (a) The appropriations for the Children's Bureau increased enormously in a few years.
  - 2. The fifty-fifty plan is abandoned only temporarily.
- B. The expense would be unnecessary and unjustifiable.
  - 1. The increased cost would not provide commensurate return service.
  - 2. It would be more economical to increase the appropriations for the present bureau.
  - 3. National economy is the nation's greatest need.
- C. The proposed department would be inefficient.
  - 1. It would be impotent to achieve its purposes.
    - a. It could not insist on the introduction of its standards and recommendations.
  - 2. It would be subject to the inefficiency and waste that characterizes other government bureaus.
  - 3. Existing agencies are better able to undertake the research and scientific work.
- D. The cause of education can be effectively promoted by other means.
  - 1. Reorganization in the educational service of the government can be brought about without the creation of a department of education.
  - 2. Better state control can be attained.
  - 3. A commission could be established to consider educational interests.

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## GENERAL DISCUSSION

### HISTORY OF LEGISLATION<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after the establishment of the Department of Agriculture by Congress in 1862, a movement was started for the establishment of a Department of Education. In 1866 the National Education Association presented a memorial to Congress on the subject with the result that Representative James A. Garfield of Ohio, later President of the United States, introduced a bill to create an independent department and succeeded in having it passed by the House. The debate in the Senate was principally upon the question of whether the bill should create a Department or a Bureau. As finally passed the bill provided for a Department. The head of the department was a commissioner, not a Cabinet officer. At that time the only Department heads included in the Cabinet were the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Treasury.

In 1868, a year after its establishment the Department of Education was reduced to the rank of a bureau in the Department of the Interior, with the annual appropriation greatly reduced.

For several years there was a bill before the Senate, periodically introduced by Senator Owen. This measure provided in substance for the transformation of the Bureau of Education into a Department of Education, with appropriations adequate to enable it to investigate educational conditions and to promote desirable educational movements throughout the country. This bill did not secure sufficient backing to be favorably reported by the committee which had it in charge.

<sup>1</sup> From *Congressional Digest*. 5:152-4. May, 1926.

At the time the United States entered the World War, the educational activities of the Government were carried on in more than thirty separate departments, boards, commissions and bureaus. Large funds were involved in the aggregate undertaking. Yet there was no relation between the several agencies.

In February, 1918, a committee of the American Council on Education prepared a report setting forth the necessity for a Department of Education and requesting the Senate Committee on Education and Labor to give favorable consideration to the Owen Bill then before it. Senator Hoke Smith, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, was sympathetic with the committee's desires, but was of the opinion that a broader measure than the Owen Bill was needed in order to secure the support of Congress and to meet the demands of the existing war-time emergency. The committee of the American Council on Education accordingly set about the preparation of a measure which would conform with the views both of Congress and of the constituent associations of the Council.

Meanwhile another movement started. At the end of February, 1918, the National Education Association appointed a Commission on the National Emergency in Education. The Commission began at once to study the principal defects of the national educational system as revealed by the war. These were believed to be: (a) the failure of the schools to reach the non-English speaking aliens and native illiterates; (b) the failure of the schools to provide an effective program of health education; (c) the great inequalities of public schools and particularly the inferiority of many rural schools; and (d) the lack of a sufficient supply of trained teachers. The Commission early came to the conclusion that these defects could not be speedily remedied without substantial subsidies from the Federal Government. It therefore proposed to draft a bill which would provide, not only for a Department of

Education to unify and co-ordinate the Government's educational efforts, but also for large Federal appropriations to be apportioned among the States in such a way as to cure the worst of the defects noted above. The first form of the bill to be presented to Congress was introduced by Senator Hoke Smith and bore the number S. 4987. Subsequently, as the result of criticisms from various quarters, it was revised and reintroduced as the Smith-Towner Bill (S. 1017 and H. R. 7) in May, 1919.

The Committee of the American Council on Education did not carry out its plan to present a measure of its own, providing for the creation of a Department of Education, although it drafted such a bill.

On October 10, 1918, Senator Hoke Smith, Ga., D., introduced in the Senate a bill (S. 4987) to establish a Department of Education, and Congressman Horace Towner, Iowa, R., on January 28, 1919, introduced in the House a companion bill (H. R. 15238). The Senate Committee on Education and Labor held hearings on this bill, beginning December 5, 1918.

This bill was revised and was again introduced in the House on May 19, 1919 by Congressman Towner (H. R. 7), and a companion bill (S. 1017) was introduced in the Senate by Senator Smith of Georgia. Joint hearings were held on these bills by the Committee on Education and Labor of the Senate and the Committee on Education of the House in July, 1919.

On January 17, 1921, the Committee on Education in the House of Representatives, to which was submitted the bill H. R. 7, reported the same back to the House with certain amendments with the recommendation that the amendments be agreed to and that the bill as thus amended be passed. On March 1, 1921, the Committee on Education and Labor in the Senate also made a report back to the Senate on S. 1017.

This bill was again revised, and on April 11, 1921, was introduced in the House by Congressman Towner

(H. R. 7), and in the Senate by Senator Thomas Sterling, S. Dak., R. (S. 1252). This bill was commonly known as the Towner-Sterling educational bill.

On May 5, 1921, Senator William S. Kenyon introduced in the Senate in the first session of the 67th Congress S. 1607, a bill to establish a Department of Public Welfare, and a companion bill H.R. 5837 was introduced in the House of Representatives on the same day by Congressman Simeon D. Fess. During the same month joint hearings were held on these two bills. No report was made by either committee. Educators and the friends of education were opposed to the inclusion of education in a subordinate position in the proposed Department of Public Welfare as provided in this bill. They appeared at the hearing on this bill in May, 1921, and presented strong arguments in favor of a separate Department of Education with a Secretary of Education in the President's Cabinet.

This same bill was introduced on December 17, 1923, by Congressman Reed, N. Y., R., in the House (H. R. 3923), and in the Senate by Senator Sterling (S. 1337). The Senate Committee on Education and Labor held hearings on this bill January 23, 1924, and the Committee on Education of the House held hearings on it from February 20, 1924, to June 4, 1924.

The Towner-Sterling Bill proposed to create a Department of Education, with an office in the Cabinet and various other officers, and authorized an appropriation of \$100,000,000 per year, divided as follows:

Seven million five hundred thousand dollars for the removal of illiteracy, \$7,500,000 for Americanization, \$20,000,000 for physical education, \$15,000,000 for the preparation of public school teachers, and \$50,000,000 for equalizing educational opportunities in the States.

The basis of apportionment follows: The \$7,500,000 for the removal of illiteracy was to be apportioned to the States in the proportions which their illiterate population

of 14 years or over, not including foreign born illiterates, bears to the total illiterate population of the United States. The \$7,500,000 for Americanization was to be apportioned in the proportion which the respective foreign-born population of the States bears to the total foreign-born population of the United States.

The \$20,000,000 for physical education was to be apportioned to the States in the proportion which their respective population bears to the total population of the United States (per capita basis). The \$15,000,000 for the training of teachers was to be apportioned in the proportion in which the number of public-school teachers in the respective States bears to the total number of public-school teachers in the United States. The \$50,000,000 for equalization of educational opportunities was to be apportioned one-half in the proportion that the number of children between the ages of 6 and 21 of the respective States bears to the total number of such children in the United States, and one-half in the proportion which the number of school-teachers employed in the respective States bears to the total number of public-school teachers in the United States.

#### SIXTY-NINTH CONGRESS

On December 11, 1925, Congressman Reed, N.Y., R., introduced a new bill (H. R. 5000) to create a Department of Education, etc., in the House, and in the Senate a companion bill was introduced on December 8, 1925, by Senator Curtis, Kan., R., (S. 291). It provides in general as follows:

(1) For the creation of a Secretary of Education to be appointed by the President at a salary of \$15,000 per annum.

(2) The appointment of an Assistant Secretary of Education to be appointed by the President at a salary of \$10,000 per annum.

(3) The appointment of a solicitor, chief clerk, disbursing clerk, and such chiefs of bureaus and such scientific, technical, and clerical assistants as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of the act.

(4) The Bureau of Education is transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Education.

(5) The Federal Board for Vocational Education is transferred to the Department of Education.

(6) The authority powers and duties conferred and imposed by law upon the Secretary of the Interior with relation to the Columbia Institution for the deaf and Howard University (for colored students) shall be exercised and performed by the Secretary of Education.

(7) The Department of Education shall collect such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and in foreign countries. In order to aid the people of the several States in establishing and maintaining more efficient schools and school systems, in devising better methods of organization, administration, and financing of education, in developing better types of school buildings and in providing for their use, in improving methods of teaching, and in developing more adequate curricula and courses of study, research shall be undertaken in (1) rural education; (2) elementary education: (3) secondary education: (4) higher education: (5) professional education: (6) physical education, including health education and recreation; (7) special education for the mentally and physically handicapped; (8) the training of teachers; (9) immigrant education; (10) adult education; and (11) such other fields as in the judgment of the Secretary of Education may require attention and study.

The department shall make available to educational officers in the several States and to other persons interested in education the results of the research and investigations conducted by it.



(8) Authorizes annual appropriations of \$1,500,000 for paying salaries and the conducting of studies and investigations.

On December 8, 1925, Congressman Tillman, Ark., D., introduced in the House a bill, (H. R. 4097) to create a Department of Education. Referred to the House Committee on Education.

On January 28, 1926, Senator Means, Colo., R., introduced in the Senate a bill (S. 2841) to create a Department of Education. Referred to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor. This bill differs from the Curtis-Reed bill in three points: First, in paragraphs 6 and 7 the Means bill provides for one advisory committee to consist of the superintendent of schools (or similar officer) in each State, and of the territories and possessions, making 53 in all; the advisory committee is to meet in Washington annually to consider and report back to the States on the report of the Secretary of Education.

The Means bill provides for a salary of \$12,000 for the Secretary of Education and provides for three assistants with salaries at \$7,500, \$6,000 and \$5,000. The appropriation is reduced to \$500,000. The Curtis bill provides for an appropriation of \$1,500,000.

The Curtis-Reed bill provides that the Federal Board for Vocational Education be transferred to the Department of Education, and all the authority, powers, and duties heretofore conferred or imposed by law upon the Federal Board for Vocational Education shall be exercised and performed by the board as a division of the Department of Education. The Secretary of Education shall be a member of the Federal Board for Vocational Education and ex-officio chairman of said board. The authority, powers, and duties conferred and imposed by law upon the Secretary of the Interior with relation to the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Howard University, shall be exercised and performed by the Secretary of Education. The Means bill makes no such provision for

vocational education, Columbia Institute for the Deaf and Howard University.

Joint hearings before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor and the House Committee on Education were held on the bills S. 291 and H. R. 5000 and S. 2841, on February 24, 25 and 26, 1926.

## RECENT FEDERAL LEGISLATION ON EDUCATION <sup>2</sup>

The history of the Federal Government's participation in the educational affairs of the country may be divided into two periods. The first was one hundred and twenty-six years long, the second has been something less than eight. From the time of the adoption of the Constitution down to 1914 the policy of the Federal Government with respect to education was perfectly consistent. Education was regarded as a function of the states, not in any sense a function of the National Government. Occasionally the Government made grants to the states for the promotion of education. During the first hundred years of the nation's life all of these grants were land grants, culminating in those famous grants which established the colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts. Thereafter from time to time the Federal Government made continuing appropriations for the maintenance of the colleges so established. These now amount to a respectable annual income for each of the colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts. But Federal supervision of activities carried on by funds derived from grants of land or from annual appropriations made prior to 1914 was not provided for. In other words it was the policy of the Federal Government to stimulate desirable educational activities within the states, but never to direct them or even negatively to exercise control over them.

<sup>2</sup> Address delivered at the inauguration of President David Kinley, of the University of Illinois, December 1, 1921, by Dr. Samuel P. Capen. *Educational Record*. 3:18-26. January, 1922.

This policy was reinforced by the character of the agencies which the government set up to deal with its concerns in the educational field. The Bureau of Education, the Government's principal education office, was charged with the collection and dissemination of information. It had no administrative powers. Other offices subsequently created to look after the educational interests of special departments of the Government were of a similar character. The powers granted to them were not such as to violate the Government's traditional policy of non-interference.

The passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, providing for cooperative agricultural extension, marked the beginning of a departure from this policy. The beginning was small and inconspicuous. Because the Smith-Lever Act did not affect the regularly organized work of educational institutions it was not at first generally identified as an important educational measure. The Smith-Lever Act makes large continuing appropriations to the states for agricultural extension to be carried on cooperatively by the colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts and the United States Department of Agriculture. In order to secure its allotment of government money each state must match the Federal appropriation by an equal sum raised from local sources. By implication the act also places in the hands of the Federal Government determinative power with respect to the way in which the joint appropriations are to be spent. It states: "that the work shall be carried on in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the Secretary of Agriculture and the State Agricultural College" and provides further that "before the funds. . . appropriated shall become available to any college for any fiscal year plans for the work to be carried on . . . shall be submitted by the proper officials of each college and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture." Almost immediately the Department of Agriculture developed a large administrative

bureau and a supervisory field force to enable it to comply with these provisions.

The Smith-Lever Act was one of the most portentous acts ever passed by Congress. It not only inaugurated a new kind of government procedure in the field of education. It embodied, unless I am mistaken, the first provision for financial cooperation between the Federal Government and the states on the dollar for dollar basis. This fiscal device fell upon sore-beset legislators as manna from heaven. Almost over night it rose to the dignity of a principle. As a political measure the device was a stroke of genius. It had the double advantage of taking the curse off large Federal appropriations and of making the home districts believe they were receiving presents from the Government. Of equally magical quality was the euphemistic phrase "cooperation with the states." It has become an irresistible slogan. A legislative proposal designed to remedy any social defect by the expediture of Federal money needs only to carry the potent clause, "for cooperation with the states," to secure the enthusiastic endorsement of almost any organized body of citizens.

But the principle of so-called cooperative appropriations wholly or partly under Federal control has never been subjected to critical scrutiny. Has the country had sufficient experience with such measures to warrant a judgment concerning the wisdom of the policy which they embody? Let us examine those that deal with education.

It is, of course, well known that great benefits have come through the promotion of agricultural education under the Smith-Lever Act. The act has been on the whole sympathetically and tactfully administered and there has been no marked discontent at Federal interference among those that the law affects. Evidences of friction, however, have not been altogether wanting. But if the act had stood alone the desirability of this method of fostering an educational movement might never have been questioned.

But within three years the Smith-Lever Act was followed by the Smith-Hughes Act for Vocational Education. This measure provided for the annual appropriation of still larger sums of Federal money to be matched by state or local levies, the combined appropriations to be used for vocational training in public secondary schools and for the training of vocational teachers. It also created an independent Federal Board to administer the appropriations. The Act imposed specific and exacting conditions upon the states in the use of Federal funds. Moreover all state programs of training, including proposed courses of study and methods of instruction, must be submitted to the Federal Board for Vocational Education for approval. The government agency was thus clothed with comprehensive powers. The history of the relations of the Government with local educational authorities in the administration of the Vocational Education Act is familiar to every student of education. Difficulties and dissensions have been common. Again it is only fair to say that these may not have offset the benefits derived from the act but they furnish an unhappy contrast to the harmonious developments of the colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts under a different Federal dispensation.

It is also worth while to note in passing that the Vocational Education Act contributed still further to the disorganization of the Government's own educational activities. By it vocational education was recognized as a thing apart and a separate government office was established to care for it. Whether one approves of fifty-fifty appropriations, or of intimate government supervision of local educational undertakings or not, I think it will be generally admitted that the organic separation of the machinery for vocational education from the rest of the Government's educational effort was peculiarly unfortunate.

Twice again within the last year and a half Congress

has entered the fringe of the educational field with measures precisely similar in fundamental policy to the Smith-Hughes Act. The Act for Industrial Rehabilitation passed in 1920 appropriates money to the states for the vocational rehabilitation through training of persons injured in industry. The appropriations are made on almost identical terms with the appropriations for vocational education and they are administered by the Federal Board for Vocational Education.

Finally in the closing days of the session which has just adjourned the Maternity Bill became a law. The educational implications of this measure are less direct, but the now familiar principle once more appears in its full integrity. There are dollar for dollar appropriations and government approval of state projects. The bill also brings into being a new board and confers upon still another bureau—this time the Children's Bureau—authority over local educational efforts.

Let us now see where we are. It is apparent that extraordinary rapid progress has been made in the development of this new cooperative policy in the short space of seven years. Four important educational measures have been passed, three of which open up new fields of educational activity to joint government and state exploitation. The Federal appropriations made under these acts increase annually for a period of years. When the maximum is reached the Federal Government will be spending a little over fifteen million dollars a year on the enterprises in question. It is interesting to compare these expenditures with the Federal expenditures for the colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts. After fifty years the Federal Government spends on the sixty-eight land-grant colleges for instruction and experimentation approximately three and a half million dollars annually. It would be superfluous to comment on the far-reaching influence over all higher and secondary education that has emanated from the colleges of agriculture and me-

chanic arts. No serious disagreements have marred the relations of these land-grant colleges with the Government except such as have arisen over the conduct of extension work since 1914. Constant and increasing friction, on the other hand, has attended the Government's efforts in those other fields that we have been discussing. The work of individual institutions has been warped and distorted. Local and state officers have been subjected to continual irritation.

Nevertheless, Congress and what might be called the uplift lobby are undaunted. The principle of fifty-fifty cooperative appropriations so far from being seriously questioned is now the accepted formula for all important measures designed to affect education. My subject does not include pending legislation but I may perhaps be pardoned if I allude briefly to certain of the important bills now before Congress.

There is first of all the Towner-Sterling Bill which provides for the creation of a Department of Education and authorizes the appropriation of one hundred million dollars a year to cooperate with the states in curing the most patent defects in our educational system. The framers of this measure have indeed been warned by the unhappy episodes that have marked the execution of the Smith-Hughes Act. In the hope of preventing the possibility of offensive Federal dictation the bill specifically reserves to the local authorities complete supervision and control of educational activities carried on under the joint appropriations totaling two hundred million dollars. and especially those who have studied the development of centralizing tendencies in the Government of the United States, believe that, in spite of reservations to the contrary, a large measure of Federal control will inevitably follow the distribution of such considerable government subsidies. But whether the optimists or the alarmists are right is for the moment beside the point. The Towner-Sterling Bill provides for cooperative national and state appropriations. Most students of government, however,

The Fess-Capper Bill for Physical Education is in one sense a fractional part of the Towner-Sterling Bill. It is designed to establish a national system of physical education by cooperative appropriations under Federal direction. Ten million dollars annually of Federal money is provided to be matched by state funds. Control of the same drastic character authorized by the Smith-Hughes Act is vested in the Commissioner of Education.

And within the last two years a number of other bills of similar or identical construction intended to benefit public health or the work of Americanization, or tending to promote some unorthodox educational activity, have been introduced in Congress. These have been paralleled by measures affecting other activities and embodying the same principles. In this connection it should not be forgotten that the most expensive cooperative measure of all, the Good Roads Act, is built on precisely the same principle.

Certain conclusions can now easily be drawn from the experience of the last seven years with Federal legislation bearing on education. In the first place it is obvious that the new type of Federal law produces action without delay. It buys action. No such country-wide development of agricultural extension or vocational education could possibly have been induced in this brief period without the combined pressure of Federal subsidies and Federal authority. The proponents of the measures already passed and of those still pending emphasize this fact—and properly. But, as has been said, action is attended by antagonism and resentment toward the Government on the part of those who are by this means induced to act. This is an equally important fact and must be faced.

In the second place, the measures that have been discussed have already radically altered the long accepted relationship between the Federal Government and the states. The Federal Government previously entered the



states only in the interests of national defense and for the protection of life and property. Through these recent acts it now exercises control in other fields. To that extent the autonomy of the states has been curtailed. But the autonomy of the states is not curtailed merely by bureaucratic orders from Washington. There is still another more important influence. Already a very considerable portion of state revenues is claimed for purposes designated by the Federal Government. Let the principle which we have been discussing continue to dominate Federal legislation for a decade or two longer and the major part of all state tax levies will be mortgaged in advance for the support of undertakings determined at the seat of the Government. By a gradual and unsuspected process of transition the respective functions of the Federal and state governments will have changed. This is what fiscal cooperation with the states on the fifty-fifty basis—Smith-Lever, Smith-Hughes, Sterling-Towner cooperation—really means.

Do we want it? Perhaps we do. But whether we do or not let us recognize it. Let us examine every proposed piece of legislation embodying provisions for financial cooperation with full consciousness of what its passage implies.

But if some persons do wish to see the Government continue this method of participation in American education, I am frank to say that I do not. In closing I should like to define what I believe to be the Government's legitimate and fruitful function in the conduct of the nation's educational enterprise. This function is clearly indicated by the old and the new experiments in the promotion of the intellectual interests of the country.

The Government of the United States is engaged in two distinct kinds of national service. The first is defensive or conservative, the second is creative. Under the defensive service of the Government are properly grouped all those ancient activities relating to the raising

of money, the administration of justice, provision for military defense, postal communication, and the adjustment of foreign relations. The agencies which the Government has devised to carry on these activities are agencies of self-preservation. Within the spheres in which they operate they must control absolutely the lives, the property, or the conduct of citizens, else the nation's safety is jeopardized. Back of them lies the full physical force of the Government.

The second kind of service, the creative service of the Government, is of quite a different character. In it are included those activities designed to foster industrial production, to encourage scientific inquiry, to promote social welfare, and to advance education. Very evidently the sanction behind the Government's promotion of these creative concerns of the nation is not force. It is not even the coercive power of subsidies. What is it? It is persuasion. This is proved by reviewing the history of any of the government establishments that deal with these creative interests.

How did the Department of Agriculture effect a revolution in the nation's basic industry in the short space of fifty years? Certainly not by fiat; not by the distribution of money. The result was achieved by knowledge, ideas, publicity. In other words, by persuasion. And the great subsidies and mandatory laws that the department has recently had to administer are a misfortune to it and to the interests that it serves, although the department may not be aware of the fact.

Why has the Bureau of Education with its insignificant appropriations and its shifting personnel had an influence on American education out of all proportion to its size and resources? Because its task was to investigate and promote, and because it had no administrative powers. Commissioners of education have occasionally desired to change this situation, but it was fortunate for

education and for the bureau that they were unable to do so.

What is the source of the prestige of the Children's Bureau? Not its powers for it has had none, but rather the accuracy of its studies of sociological conditions and the validity of its conclusions. And now, at last, there has fallen to it the task of administering the subsidies carried by the Maternity Bill and so of exercising control in the field in which it has previously furnished inspiration alone. In spite of the fact that the Children's Bureau was eager to get these subsidies, the bureau is now really an object of commiseration.

The lesson of the Government's experience in dealing with the creative interests of the nation is plain. These interests flourish if furnished with ideas, intellectual guidance, leadership. They suffer if subjected to control. The ancient policy of non-interference—which probably was adopted and persevered in largely by accident and which was finally altered without full realization of what the alteration entailed—was the right policy.

By far the greatest and most important creative interest of the nation is education. What does education need from the Federal Government in the future? It needs three things: unification of the Government's own educational enterprises; studies on a large scale of the educational problems of the country; and leadership. To meet these needs there must be a consolidation of bureaus and offices at Washington and a larger, better supported, more influential establishment that can command the services of the best minds in the country. Whether this establishment should be an independent department, a commission, or a division of a department is of secondary importance—although most of us have our preferences. It is of first importance that the establishment be charged with only those functions which experience has proved are helpful and vitalizing to American education everywhere.

NEW EDUCATION BILL <sup>3</sup>

The new Education Bill will probably be introduced at the coming session of Congress by Senator Curtis and Representative Reed, and will be known as the Reed-Curtis Bill. This measure has had a long and interesting history, having been proposed first to the 65th Congress by Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and known as the Smith Bill. Failing of passage, it was reintroduced in the 66th Congress as the Smith-Towner Bill. It has been known subsequently as the Towner-Sterling and Sterling-Reed Bill. Although committee hearings have been held on this measure, it has never succeeded in being called up for a vote.

The new Education Bill differs radically from its predecessors. The earlier bills were of the familiar fifty-fifty type, that is, appropriation measures in which the Federal Government allots 50 per cent of a specified sum for a certain public work on condition that the state raises a like amount. Such measures inevitably lead to a large amount of federal control and supervision of the activity for which the Government appropriates money. The old education bills were all of this type. The original Smith Bill, expressly asked for federal control of education, a government policy initiated by the Smith-Hughes and Smith-Lever Acts, but which all historians acknowledge to be a new departure in the relations of the Federal Government towards education. In subsequent drafts of the Education Bill the federal control feature was toned down, and finally disappeared altogether when a positive statement against such control was put in the bill. Despite the theoretical statements against federal control incorporated in the bill, there remained the fact that \$100,000,000 of government money was to be appropriated for various educational purposes, a fact which

<sup>3</sup> By Rev. James H. Ryan, Ph.D. *Catholic Educational Review*. 23: 589-92. December, 1925.

many students contended meant that in the long run the Federal Government would control the school.

In the new or Reed-Curtis Bill the appropriation feature is lacking entirely. The new measure, therefore, presents a quite different problem in educational legislation than we had to meet in previous education bills. To gain a clear concept of what the new Education Bill is, it might be well to recall the main features of the education bills upon which it is based but which have failed of passage.

The Sterling-Reed Bill contained two principal provisions: first, a Department of Education with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet; second, an appropriation by the United States to the states of \$100,000,000 annually on condition that they raise a like amount, for different purposes such as the removal of illiteracy, Americanization, equalization of educational opportunity, physical education, and teacher training. The new Education Bill, Reed-Curtis Bill, omits all mention of subsidy appropriations and concentrates on the Department of Education with a Secretary in the Cabinet feature of the older measures.

The principal proponent of the Education Bill has been the National Education Association, which is also sponsoring the new Education Bill. The N.E.A. has been supported by many organizations, especially of women, and by Scottish Rite Masons, Southern Jurisdiction. In opposition to this measure are ranged educators, many of nation-wide repute, and organizations such as the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

The arguments which have defeated the older education bills and have successfully turned the tide of public opinion against federal bureaucracy and continued encroachments on the educational rights of the states may be briefly summarized under the following headings.

It was objected that the Sterling-Reed Bill involved

federal control of education, a policy which goes directly against the explicit provisions of the Constitution of the United States, which leaves the control of the school in the hands of the several states. To the reply of defenders of the bill that the bill expressly excepts federal control of education within the states, it was stated that such a proviso is absurd as well as futile. If the Central Government appropriated \$100,000,000 annually to the encouragement of education in the states, it would be compelled to supervise the spending of such a vast sum unless it wished to be convicted of stupidity and lack of elementary business sense.

Again, this bill would centralize education, thus doing away with local control, which from the very beginning has been the American policy in education, and introduce into the school the evils of standarization, red tape, and general all-round stagnation. It was contended that the progress of education since 1870 has been such that it would be foolhardy to turn over the schools to the Government when it is very evident that the states have met their educational obligations in a successful manner. Some states, it is true, have been backward in education as in other things. The remedy is not federal aid and control but a developed public conscience and larger aid on the part of the state.

Thirdly, the Sterling-Reed Bill is economically unsound and wasteful, as are all fifty-fifty bills. Not only would Congress, if this bill passed, have the power to determine what state appropriations shall be made but how these same appropriations should be spent. A state may imagine that it is getting something for nothing when it receives federal money. Every serious man knows that federal aid carries with it a larger measure of federal interference. Furthermore, no rule of apportioning federal grants can be worked out which will not issue in giving states money they do not need.

Finally, the Sterling-Reed Bill, by its provision of a

Secretary in the Cabinet, would throw education into national politics with disastrous results to our schools.

The new Education Bill provides for a Department of Education with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet. It also outlines the organization of the department, to which many educational bureaus and offices now scattered about Washington would be joined, and the duties of the personnel. The work of the Department of Education would be exclusively scientific and fact finding. It would aid education by giving advice, collecting data, and making surveys. \$1,500,000 would be appropriated annually for this work. A National Advisory Committee on Education would be established.

The opponents of the new bill contend that, while it does not appropriate federal money and is therefore less obnoxious than the older bills, it cannot be accepted because a Department of Education is not necessary, the present bureau being able, if it were developed, to do all the work which the new department intends to perform. They feel also that the establishment of the new department would be an entering wedge for federal control. Once established, its proponents would then demand larger and larger appropriations until finally the school would be controlled by the department. Finally, they contend that each state has its own Secretary of Education and that a Federal Secretary means throwing the schools into politics.

The defenders of the bill contend that education, being of primary interest to the nation, should be represented in the Cabinet. Certainly, by its scientific work, a department would help to develop education, and such aid should be given by the government because of the great facilities it possesses to do sound research work. Moreover, a Department of Education does not involve federal control any more than the Departments of Commerce or of Agriculture involve federal control of the commercial and agricultural life of the nation. As a

matter of history, these departments have greatly assisted American commerce and agriculture. Finally, the Government is doing a great mount of educational work, but in a haphazard, inefficient manner. All this work should be organized under one central department, for reasons of economy and efficiency.

It is too early to predict what shall be the fate of the Reed-Curtis Bill. The omission of the appropriation features of the older bills, as well as insistence on constructive features proper to it, has brought to this new bill a great deal of support, especially from educators. On the other hand, there is a tremendous and widespread aversion on the part of the public to interference with the states by the Federal Government. The revolt against further federal encroachments on the rights of the state is in full swing. Only the future can tell whether the new Education Bill shall be able to surmount this strong opposition.



## AFFIRMATIVE DISCUSSION

### EDUCATION'S FIGHT FOR RECOGNITION<sup>1</sup>

The United States is unique among the civilized nations of the world in that it fails to recognize education as one of the fundamental interests of the Nation.

When the President of the United States calls his Cabinet together for conference and advice, agriculture is so recognized. The one concern of the Secretary of Agriculture is the advancement of the Nation's agricultural efficiency. Congress, in 1923, authorized appropriations for the use of the Department of Agriculture to the amount of \$145,500,000. The 1923 Digest of Appropriations lists in detail the specific purposes for which this sum was voted by Congress. The following are representative: Over half a million was appropriated "for investigating the disease of hog cholera and for its control or eradication by such means as may be necessary—either independently or in cooperation with farmers' associations, State or county authorities." Six hundred thousand was voted "for the payment of indemnities on account of cattle slaughtered in connection with the eradication of tuberculosis from animals." Over a half million was provided "for investigating the food habits of North American birds and other animals in relation to agriculture, horticulture, and forestry" and for similar investigations.

In the President's Cabinet, commerce is recognized as a paramount national interest. The Secretary of Commerce speaks for the business interests of the Nation.

<sup>1</sup> By John K. Norton. United States. House. Committee on Education. To create a department of education; hearings on H.R. 3923. p. 184-8. 68th Congress, 1st Session. 1924.

Congress, in 1923, appropriated \$21,000,000 for the work of this department. Nearly a half million dollars was provided "to investigate and report on domestic as well as foreign problems relating to production, distribution, and marketing." Nearly a million dollars was appropriated for the "collection of statistics" including "semimonthly reports of cotton production"—and "quarterly reports of tobacco." "For protecting the sponge fisheries," \$549,000 was provided.

When the President's Cabinet meets, one member is present whose sole interest is the welfare of labor. Nearly nine million dollars was provided for the work of the Department of Labor by Congress in 1923. There was an appropriation of \$225,000 "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States." The sum of \$242,000 was appropriated for the maintenance of a bureau to collect statistics of peculiar significance to the wage earners of the Nation.

Why is the Federal Government so generous in making appropriations for the advancement of the Nation's agricultural interests, in assisting in the solution of the great problems of modern business and industry, and in guarding the welfare of labor—while at the same time the most niggardly appropriations are made for investigations which would profoundly influence public-school practice in the direction of greater efficiency? It is because the people of the Nation fail to appreciate the crucial part played by the public school in a democracy? Those who know the sentiment of the Nation would not accept this explanation.

The answer is found in the organization of our Federal Government. Commerce and industry have a voice in the Nation's government. A Herbert Hoover constantly keeps the welfare and the problems of Nation's great business interests before the President and his Cabinet. When the Secretary of Commerce discusses the Nation's business interests the Nation listens. His prestige and ability command the attention of Congress.

His recommendations for legislation designed to advance industry are not lightly passed by. A Wallace and a Davis similarly stand ever ready to speak for agriculture and for labor.

Education has no such representation. Education is submerged in the Department of the Interior, which includes a diversity of national interests. Of the 1923 appropriation of \$328,000,000 for the Department of the Interior, \$161,990 was for the use of the United States Bureau of Education as such—or less than one-twentieth of 1 per cent. This figure is roughly representative of the percentage of the time and thought that education may expect to receive from Secretaries of the Interior. Is it not too much to expect that any Secretary of the Interior, selected because of his touch with a miscellany of great questions, such as the reclamation service, the industry of mining, and Indian affairs, will be in close touch with the vital problems of education?

Only a department of education with a secretary in the President's Cabinet can expect to command the resources and respect that will lift education to the rightful place among the Nation's primary interests. It is too much to expect that the people of the Nation, that the Congress of the United States, or that the 800,000 teachers of the Nation will be satisfied with a submerged bureau enjoying a smaller appropriation than is made available for the use of the office of some of our State superintendents of schools.

Why is education a primary national interest? What does education deserve to rank with agriculture, commerce, and labor? Education directly concerns all of our 110,000,000 people. Each year 25,000,000 children come under the direct influence of our 275,000 public schools. Close to \$1,500,000,000 is being expended yearly for the maintenance of these schools. These schools affect every phase of our increasingly complex civilization. The results of good schools or of poor schools are not confined

to the localities in which schools exist. The ignorance that results in hookworm in Alabama makes raw cotton more expensive in Massachusetts. Tuberculosis in Massachusetts adds to the cost of an Iowa farmer's overalls. The negro illiteracy of the South almost overnight becomes the problem of Pennsylvania. We are all affected, we are all poorer, when any of our population is physically or educationally below par.

The education bill would (1) create a department of education with a secretary in the President's Cabinet; (2) create a national council of 100 representative educators and laymen; (3) encourage the States, by Federal aid, to meet five educational needs of national importance: (1) The removal of illiteracy; (2) the Americanization of the foreign-born; (3) the promotion of physical education; (4) the training of teachers; (5) the equalization of educational opportunities.

It is for the public interest that tubercular hogs should be destroyed and that the owners of such hogs should be indemnified from Federal funds. But is the eradication of tubercular hogs of less national concern than the prevention of illiteracy among thousands of our native-born citizens? Is a half million dollar Federal appropriation "for investigating the disease of hog cholera and for its control or eradication by such means as may be necessary" more of a national function than the appropriation of a similar amount to a department of education to "conduct studies in the field of education"? Is the provision of "quarterly reports" on tobacco production more of a national function than the provision of adequate school statistics for the guidance of local school boards in their expenditures of a billion and a half of school money each year?

Public education is to-day a more important national interest than forest supervision, concrete highways, fish propagation, game preserves, or the control of cattle tick or bovine tuberculosis. All of these we accept to-day as proper national functions.

*Is education submerged?—Some appropriations for the  
Department of the Interior, 1923*

Bureau of Pensions .....	\$254,246,362.67
Reclamation Service .....	14,800,021.01
Construction and maintenance of Alaska RR ...	4,510,210.00
Protection and survey of public lands and timber	1,175,000.00
Investigating mine accidents .....	378,000.00
Support of Indians in Arizona .....	185,000.00
Bureau of Education .....	161,990.00

*National educational liabilities*

Men rejected as unfit for military service .....	1,340,625
Yearly economic loss "from preventable disease and death" .....	\$1,800,000,000
Confessed illiterates .....	5,000,000
Yearly economic loss due to illiteracy .....	\$ 825,000,000
Child workers between the ages of 10 and 15 (1920 census) .....	1,060,858
Children between the ages of 7 and 13 not attending "any kind of educational institution" (1920 census) .....	1,437,000

*Should education have a spokesman in the President's Cabinet?—  
Some Federal appropriations, 1923*

Investigation and control of hog cholera .....	\$ 510,000
Payment of indemnities to owner of animals slaughtered in connection with eradication of tuberculosis in animals .....	600,000
Location and destruction of barberry bushes .....	350,000
Purchase and distribution of valuable seeds .....	360,000
Prevention of manufacture and sale of adulterated foods .....	671,401
Preventing spread of moths .....	600,000
Investigating food habits of North American birds and other animals .....	502,240
Enforcement of United States grain standard act ...	536,000
Printing and binding, Department of Agriculture ...	800,000
Suppressing spread of pink boll weevil .....	547,840
Field investigations for promotion of commerce .....	379,100
Investigation relating to production, distribution, and marketing .....	450,000
Securing information for semimonthly reports on cotton production and quarterly reports on tobacco production .....	895,000
Testing structural material .....	175,000
Lighthouse Service .....	4,200,000
Protecting seal and salmon fisheries in Alaska .....	165,000
Protection and survey of public lands and timber ...	1,175,000

Investigating mine accidents .....	378,000
Collection of statistics by Bureau of Labor Statistics .	241,960
Promotion of welfare and hygiene of maternity and infancy .....	1,190,000
To promote and develop the welfare of wage earners.	225,000
For salaries and educational investigations of United States Bureau of Education .....	161,990

## PROPOSAL FOR A BILL TO CREATE A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION<sup>2</sup>

The National Education Association in convention on July 2 instructed its Legislative Commission to present to Congress a bill embodying the following proposals:

- (1) The creation of a Department of Education with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet.
- (2) The transfer to the Department of Education of the Bureau of Education and of the Federal Board for Vocational Education with the provision that the Federal Board for Vocational Education shall operate as a division of the Department of Education, and that the Secretary of Education shall be a member of this Board and ex officio chairman of it; that the authority, powers, duties, conferred and imposed by law, upon the Secretary of the Interior with relation to the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Howard University be exercised and performed by the Secretary of Education.
- (3) In order to coördinate the educational activities carried on by the several executive departments, and in order to devise ways and means of improving the work of the Federal Government, there shall be created a Federal Conference on Education which shall consist of one representative and one alternate appointed by the head of each department.

<sup>2</sup> From pamphlet by Dr. George D. Strayer, professor of education Teachers College, Columbia University and chairman, Legislative Commission, National Education Association. 11p. National Education Association. Washington, D.C. July, 1925.

- (4) The Department of Education shall collect such statistics and facts as will show the condition and progress of education in the several States and in foreign countries; and in order to aid the people of the several States in establishing and maintaining more efficient schools and school systems, research shall be undertaken in all fields which, in the judgment of the Secretary of Education, may require attention and study.
- (5) The Department shall make available to the educational officials in the several States and to other persons interested in education the results of researches and investigations conducted by it.
- (6) The sum of \$1,500,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, shall be appropriated annually for the purpose of paying salaries, for conducting studies and investigations, and for such other purposes as may be necessary to enable the Department of Education to carry out the provisions of the act.

There has been little dissent from the proposal that we seek to establish a Department of Education with a Secretary in the President's Cabinet. From every source there has come support for the idea that efficiency and economy in government require the consolidation in a department of those federal agencies now dealing with education. If the Department is to serve as a fact-finding and fact-distributing agency, it must have financial support sufficient to enable it to carry on its work. The proposed appropriation of \$1,500,000 annually is based upon a careful study of the cost of assembling data on a Nation-wide basis, and on the assumption that it would be advisable to cover the whole field of education once in every five years.

There are those who propose that all the functions of a Department of Education could be exercised by the Bureau of Education, if the Bureau were adequately supported. There are several reasons why it is desirable to

create the Department, rather than to hope for adequate development through the Bureau of Education. First of all, it is important to bring about the consolidation of federal agencies concerned with education. No one would seriously propose that this could be accomplished through the development of the Bureau of Education. The undertaking is of greater importance than that associated with the status of a bureau in the Department of the Interior. If educational research is to be adequately supported, it will be necessary that this function of the Federal Government be presented for the consideration of those who make the budget by one of no less rank than a cabinet officer. All matters of National concern involve education. It is of the utmost importance that the representative of this most important governmental service sit at the council table of the Nation.

We have two sorts of executive departments in the Federal Government—those charged with administrative responsibility such as war, post office, treasury, and those that have been organized for the promotion of the general welfare, agriculture, commerce, and labor. It is not an exaggeration to propose that the welfare of all of the people of the United States is more certainly determined by the progress which we make in education than by our economic well-being as promoted by the Departments of Agriculture or Commerce, or by the social adjustments which may be made by the Department of Labor.

The Federal Government has promoted education from the earliest days of the republic. By grants of land and of money from the Federal Government our school system was first established. The Federal Government is now spending approximately forty dollars annually for the support of education, other than that involved in the rehabilitation of the veterans of the World War. The creation of a Department of Education, the primary function of which is to carry on research and to disseminate useful information, has nothing in common with the



administration and control of education. Those who have supported the creation of a Federal Department are unalterably opposed to the centralization of the control of education in the Federal Government. It is just as certainly possible to promote education through reporting experiments which are undertaken, through informing people throughout the country of the adaptation of education to the needs of particular communities, as it has been to promote agriculture through the distribution of the results of experiments in that field.

Progress in education is dependent upon the scientific evaluation of current practices and upon the dissemination of the results of such inquiries to all interested in education. The Federal Department of Education should have on its staff a group of the most competent scientific workers in the field of education. These men and women will have as their primary object the assembling of facts and their interpretation. Wherever unusual progress is made or a worth while experiment carried on, the Federal Department of Education will be in position to make available for the whole country the results of these undertakings. It is through scientific investigation, and in this way only, that we may be confident of making progress in the development of our school system. It is absurd to propose that we may not coöperate in such an important undertaking because this coöperation in order to be most effective must be carried on by a federal agency.

The establishment of a Federal Department of Education is distinct from the issue of further federal support. The increase in efficiency and the economy that can be effected by the consolidation of those agencies, now operating in the Federal Government, looks in the opposite direction. The support of research in a Federal Department of Education promises returns in increased efficiency and in actual savings which will amount to many times the cost of the researches undertaken. In a single field, like that of developing more adequate and more

economical plans for school buildings, it is possible to save to the states tens of millions of dollars. Every improvements in methods of teaching, in the adaptation of schools to the needs and capacities of individual children, in the development of more adequate courses of study will add untold millions to the wealth of the country and will promote the happiness of our people. If the scientific inquiries undertaken by the Department of Education should clearly indicate that the Nation should furnish a larger degree of support for education, the question of providing this support would still rest with Congress. If the people of the United States become convinced of the desirability of a larger degree of National support for education, they will secure appropriate legislation. Surely no fair-minded person can object to the establishment of a Department of Education whose primary function it is to record the facts, available alike to those who favor larger federal support and to those who are opposed to this policy.

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION<sup>3</sup>

I am convinced of the particular value of research in education as in other fields, because of the experience in research which has extended over a number of years among all progressive industrial and commercial groups and particularly because of my own experience in a group of 16 stores, of which the store I represent is a member. We have discovered in the research conducted by these stores that great assistance is given in many directions to any of the stores which happen to be inefficient in regard to the others in some respect; for example, if the rate of turnover in some particular department is uneconomi-

<sup>3</sup> From statement of A. Lincoln Filene, chairman National Committee for a Department of Education. United States Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education; hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 353-7. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.

cally slow; if it is expending too much or too little for publicity; if its personnel department shows a lack of effective operations; if the proportion of its merchandise investments among its various departments is not reasonably correct—all of these defects in management or operation are disclosed by the research of the central organization, and the tens of thousand of dollars a year expended for this purpose is like bread cast upon the waters. It is returned manifold. Through research these stores have learned how to strengthen their organization, how to sell merchandise more efficiently and at lower prices; but above all, the exchange of information between the stores through their central organization provides each store with a measure of efficiency which exposes immediately any weakness which may develop in its operations. In fact, the cost of such research as we are doing, though it sounds like a considerable figure, is actually an investment that yields us a very large return in lessened expense and increased profit.

Similarly educational research, undertaken under Federal auspices, would act as a clearing house of information as to what the different States, cities, or towns are doing in education. This would be of great value toward lifting the weaker educational units to a level with the best. A department of education which would be constantly calling attention to progressive steps in education taken by this or the other community or State would act as a powerful force in making backward States and communities improve their methods.

A few of the fields of educational research in which I believe the Federal department of education needs to function for the benefit of all the States are these:

According to the 1920 Federal census there were 5,000,000 illiterates in the United States, 3,000,000 native born, of whom over 1,000,000 were native-born whites.

Twenty-five out of every hundred men in the draft could not write a letter or read a newspaper in English.

Research on the broadest possible basis, such as would be afforded if we had our national endeavor in education placed in the hands of a Cabinet officer, is needed to discover the most effective methods of adult education and to disseminate these findings among local school authorities to inspire them to better performance. The adults are our workers and citizens of to-day; the children are those of to-morrow. The educational needs of both must be met in a manner worthy of America's present and her future.

In 8 States \$100 is expended yearly for education per pupil; in 7 States less than \$25. We find also great variation within the States. In 1 State the cost of public education per child varies from \$828 to \$49. Two hundred and twenty-seven five hundred and seventy children in 24 States live in districts that maintain school less than 80 days per year. One million four hundred and thirty-eight thousand children between the ages of 7 and 14 years did not attend school a single day between September 1, 1919, and January 1, 1920, according to the census.

Research under the Federal departments of education would show the several States how best to distribute their funds so as to equalize educational opportunity within the States, and would call to the attention of the backward States the ways in which their educational work was deficient.

The present value of public-school property in the United States is \$3,741,906,402. In 1922, in the United States, \$382,677,176, was expended for school buildings and sites. Much of this money was wasted, because local boards have not the latest information on the proper construction and utilization of school plants.

Research would allow the school committee of each individual city to reduce expenses and carry out a far more efficient plan of school construction. Through information given by a Federal department of education it could profit by the examples, good and bad, of what other communities with similar problems had done.

One billion eight hundred million dollars is spent annually on account of public schools. We find obsolete and unjust methods of taxation; funds not distributed so as to equalize educational opportunities. It is impossible to collect comparative statistics on school costs. Many boards can not tell with accuracy what their own schools cost; it is impossible to obtain accurate figures as to the separate costs of elementary, junior, and senior high-school education. Careful budgetary procedure is probably the exception rather than the rule in planning school expenditures.

Research is needed to work out and popularize the best standardized methods of school accounting and budgetary procedure in order to guard against waste.

One million three hundred and forty-one thousand out of 5,991,000 examined in the draft were rejected for general military service; 22 out of every 100 were rejected for "military service of any kind." These figures were furnished by The Adjutant General in September, 1922, and described "as most reliable yet compiled." A committee appointed by Herbert Hoover, after careful investigation by some of the greatest authorities in the country, said: "There is experimental basis for the statement that this loss could be materially reduced and leave an economic balance in the working population alone over and above the cost of prevention of at least \$1,000,000,000."

Research is needed to provide the dissemination of adequate programs of physical hygiene throughout the country. Such information issued with the backing of a Federal department of education would quickly help us to become a more physically fit and hence a more efficient people.

Approximately 40,000 teachers in the United States in 1923 had no training beyond elementary-school graduation. At least 54 per cent of the Nation's 700,000 teachers had less than a full normal-school education, the minimum accepted in advanced countries.

The results of research in this field, made available through the broad channels of information at the disposal of a Federal department of education would encourage the States to increase the number and raise the standard to their teacher-training institutions and to raise certification requirements. Teachers with better training mean children better equipped to play efficient parts in our economic and political life.

Rapidly changing conditions make traditional courses of study inadequate. Children's talents are only partly developed and time is wasted by poor methods of teaching. Local school authorities need data in the scientific formulation of curricula.

A Federal department could distribute compilations of the best current thought on educational aims and objectives, minimum essentials in courses of study, and scientific methods for realizing the desired outcomes in terms of habits, skills, and attitudes.

(All figures quoted above were obtained from Mr. Norton, of the research department of the National Education Association, which figures are based on official Government reports, Fourteenth United States Census Statistics, State School System Bulletin No. 29, United States Bureau of Education, and other equally reliable sources.)

The small organization of retail business establishments mentioned above expends about \$150,000 in research in the form of a clearing house of information on the best business practices developed by the members. This figure represents about one-twentieth of 1 per cent of the total sales of the members composing the organizations. The expenses of a Federal department of education, as provided for in this bill, would likewise be a very small proportion of 1 per cent of the total sums now expended for education throughout the country, which are estimated for the public elementary and secondary schools for the year 1922 to be in excess of \$1,500,000,000. The

services of a Federal department of education should bear the same relation to improved methods of education as the services of this business research organization bear to the more efficient conduct of the business of the stores which are affiliated with this organization. The increased return which these stores have experienced through learning to avoid each other's faults and copy each other's virtues would be paralleled in the field of our national life as a whole if each State and community were constantly comparing itself with other States and communities in order to make its educational work a more thorough preparation for life.

When we talk about education, let us remember that we are talking about the most important institution in our national life. The worthwhileness of whatever we do depends on how well we are educated, if we take education in its broadest sense. Each year, as President Coolidge pointed out in his speech recently to the educators, our elementary and secondary schools provide for more than 26,000,000 pupils and require more than 822,000 teachers. These children and these schools are our real investment in the country's future welfare. The public education system alone employs more workers than any other industry except farming. Can we hesitate in the face of these figures to accord education a similar rank and similar attention from the Federal Government than the Federal Government now gives to commerce, agriculture, and labor?

The time has come to recognize that from the point of view of the Federal Government, education is not only as important as commerce, labor, and the others, but that in reality a proper system of education is the basis which must underlie all of our other activities, governmental or private. Those who oppose a Federal department of education have frequently done so on the ground that it would interfere and tend to supplant the educational work of the States. My own conception of a Federal depart-

ment, organized as it would be under this bill for the purpose of research and to provide inspiration for more and more useful educational activity by all our educational agencies, is the reverse of the position taken by the bill's opponents. Instead of visualizing Federal interference with State educational work as a result of the passage of this bill, I visualize the States taking increased responsibility for education and pushing their work forward more rapidly and successfully than ever. This has already been shown in the case of the Federal Board for Vocational Education. Whereas the grants to the States were conditional upon their furnishing an equal amount of money, many of the States are now expending three or four times as much as they receive from the Federal Government. Here is no shifting of educational responsibility back of the shoulders of Uncle Sam.

Let us consider briefly the results to our national life of such research in education as a Federal department could undertake, and inspire our local governments to make use of. When we assert that public education is solely the concern of each State and the communities within it, we are not doing justice to the homogenous nature of our politic and economic life. Each State is represented in our National Government by its Senators and Congressmen. These men and women make laws which are applied to all the States. The educational level in the various States is different. Are not the citizens of the States which are more advanced educationally vitally interested in seeing that the standards of the less advanced States are raised so that those who legislate for the country as a whole may be elected by constituencies having substantially the same educational advantages?

Migration from one State to another is constantly occurring. Take the migration of negroes from the South, which has gone on, probably by now approximating 2,000,000 during and since the war. It is commonly re-



ported that there are now some 200,000 negroes in the city of Chicago alone, all emigrants from Southern States. I referred to the situation in 1924 in my remarks before the Education Committee in the House. I understand that these negroes practically hold the balance of power politically in Chicago. From the point of view of developing the best possible government in Chicago, did not Chicago and the State of Illinois have the greatest interest in the educational level which these negroes had attained in the States from which they migrated?

It is well known that the less-educated workers are the less well-paid workers. Is it fair that States which possess workers with higher intelligence, drawing better wages, should be penalized economically by the competition of industries in other States whose workers are relatively undereducated and hence relatively underpaid?

Some business men from States which are advanced educationally have said when discussing a Federal department of education, "Why should a portion of our taxes be devoted to the educational needs of some other States? Let them attend to their own job." This is a remarkably short-sighted attitude for a business man to take. We all know that our wants in life increase as our knowledge increases. The totally ignorant man wants little beyond the humblest food and shelter. It is only when he has reached a certain level of education that he begins to find out about the opportunities for enjoyment in life and starts in asking for good clothes and an automobile and pretty dresses for his daughters. The more educated the people of any State are the more they want to buy goods and the better customers they make. The business man spends huge sums to educate people by his advertisements. Education is really advertising in the broadest sense. It advertises the richness and the possibilities of life. People who have acquired a new vision of life through education have made themselves able to earn more money and to spend more. They are better workers

and better customers. I do not believe a business man who has given much thought to the subject would object to a few cents or a few dollars more in taxes coming from his pocket for education when the returns to business as a whole are bound to be so great.

We are asking in this bill for an appropriation of less than a million and a half dollars for research in education. Let us compare this with the sums which the Federal Government is now expending in research in other fields. I am quoting Budget figures, showing some of the money spent on research in Federal Government in 1926:

Investigation of the diseases of tuberculosis of animals, its control and eradication .....	\$3,560,000
Eradication of southern cattle ticks .....	699,451
Investigation and improvement of cereal (\$375,000 for location and destruction of barberry bushes) .....	699,340
Investigations of insects affecting southern field crops.	255,440
Preventing spread of gypsy and brown-tailed moths ..	740,000
Securing information for census reports, semimonthly reports cotton production, etc. ....	960,000
Compiling foreign-trade statistics .....	339,980
Testing structural material, Bureau of Standards ....	230,000
Collection of statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics ..	285,000
To promote and develop welfare of wage earners ....	205,000

I am not criticizing these expenditures. I am simply citing them as examples of the need for research which the Federal Government has found in several fields. In the face of these expenditures, does the expenditure of \$1,500,000 by the Federal Government for educational research seem a very large amount in comparison to the tremendous savings in all aspects of our national life which would be made possible if we could add but a small fraction to the educational efficiency of each one of our citizens?

The Government of the United States, among the leading nations, has been the most backward in recognizing the value to the Nation as a whole of a national stimulus to the public education system. The following

nations, according to the Statemen's Year Book of 1923, now have departments of education:

Great Britain.	Belgium.	Netherlands.
Austria.	Bolivia.	Nicaragua.
Czechoslovakia.	Brazil.	Denmark.
Serbs, Croats, Slovenes.	Bulgaria.	Peru.
Italy.	Chile.	Poland.
Japan.	China.	Portugal.
Russia.	Persia.	Roumania.
Spain.	Finland.	Turkey.
Sweden.	Greece.	Siam.
France.	Mexico.	Uruguay.

The research in education, as provided by this bill, will be of greater importance than any other educational research known hitherto in this country. This is because it will be offered to the country with the sanction and recommendations of a member of the President's Cabinet. The results of Federal research in education will receive an enhanced prestige among educators and people in general. Moreover, the research itself will be more valuable because made under the auspices of the secretary of education. In the President's Cabinet sit representatives of commerce, agriculture, labor, the Army, and Navy. Each one of these great institutions is interested in the problems of education. Each Cabinet officer has special knowledge of the educational problems and needs of the men and women in the fields which he serves. By regular contact with other Cabinet officers a secretary of education would be constantly broadening his outlook on the country's educational problems. He would get unusual insights into the difficulties which rural education and vocational education and many other forms of education are facing. He would, moreover, arouse in his Cabinet associates a fuller consciousness of the role that educators play in guiding the great problems of our national life in the fields of agriculture, business, and every other field.

Education would be lifted out of its present subordinate position and made the equal in name, as it already

is in fact, of commerce and labor and the other great subjects which we have recognized to be of national concern. With education thus coming into its due place in our national outlook I would expect a quickening of all educational work, both public and private. I would expect also a broader approach henceforth to all our national problems. Education's function is to make people want to do the best thing for themselves and others and to know how to do it. This is the problem of commerce, agriculture, and labor also. Can the business man, farmer, or the worker afford to be without the advice of the educator in helping to shape, through the President's Cabinet, the national policies which affect them in such important ways?

#### NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION<sup>4</sup>

A Science of education is in the making. The results achieved are continually making it clearer that in a democracy facts control education. . . This is so obvious that educators are rapidly coming to agree that a properly constituted fact-finding federal office could not if it would either drag education under political control or impair the powers of the indestructible states.

A second significant conviction that is now universally accepted is that in a democracy schools are but part of the machinery of education. Newspapers, magazines, movies, radio, sports, autos, industry, commerce—all these and many others play vital roles in developing men who are capable of self-government. In the early days of the republic we had a continent to conquer. The pioneer spirit was essential to survival. Necessary chores helped educate the people and kept them out of mischief. Now this is all changed. The situation is so complex that illuminating facts and reliable information are needed to inspire and guide team play for the common good.

<sup>4</sup> From article by C. R. Mann. *Educational Record*. 6:53-7. April, 1925.

The task of collecting, classifying and testing all the information that is needed is too large for any local, state or voluntary organization. Each individual group must be active in finding and studying the facts of its own environment. But the significant facts of local life must be united in a national picture, which, by comparing trends and tendencies, would arouse the sporting spirit of local groups to compete for honorable mention for distinguished service in realizing more fully our national ideals.

Consideration of the two generally accepted theses just stated—namely, that facts control education, and that education is far broader than schooling—leads to a continually deepening realization of how indispensable education is to the stability of our political institutions. Therefore education as here defined may well claim rank in the national government equal to that accorded to agriculture, commerce and labor. The true functions of these departments are no more executive and administrative than are those of education. All are essentially research and news distributing agencies, enlightening the public by collecting and disseminating significant and valid information of wider scope than any state could secure by itself alone. By their constructive influence on American life, they have fully justified the wisdom of establishing them.

The centralization of administrative authority in a fact-finding department of education, or the usurpation of state and local executive autonomy, is rendered more difficult by the various voluntary professional organizations of teachers, of educational institutions and of religious denominations. Most of these are now engaged in fact-finding investigations. If the federal department attempted a partisan presentation of facts, their effect could be counteracted by presentation of the facts on the other side. It would become a battle of facts instead of a squabble over legal jurisdiction and vested rights. Significant facts may also prove to be the bulwark of the church against threatened encroachments by the state.

While there is general agreement on several basic conceptions of national organization of education, there are still honest differences of opinion on a number of important points. Such questions as the extent and proper method of applying federal financial support to education; the nature of the relations between a federal education office, with no administrative authority, and a state education office responsible for administration of a state school system, and the limits within which equalization of educational opportunity is practical and in harmony with the real spirit and intent of our Constitution. More facts than we now have are needed before such questions can be wisely settled. But the needed facts will never be collected, analyzed, classified and interpreted until a suitable agency is established to do this work with adequate material facilities and moral support.

### PARTICIPATION WANTED<sup>5</sup>

I think it is perfectly plain that the Government is bound to do more for education, to invest more money in it as years go on. Probably you are familiar with the evolution of Government outlays for education; if they were all gathered together in one place they would make at this moment a fairly respectable sum.

The Government can not stay out of this field even if it should desire to do so. That is perfectly plain; and to us who represent not only the profession but I think I may say the lay public that is interested, the important thing is that the Governmental agencies dealing with education shall deal with it in the most effective way.

I think it is perfectly clear that both the profession and the lay public want three things of the Government in its participation in education that it does not now get.

<sup>5</sup> From statement of Dr. Samuel P. Capen, chancellor of the University of Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y. United States. Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 23-4. 69th Congress, 1st Session, February, 1926.

First, it wants coordination of the Government's own enterprise. The gentleman who has preceded me has stressed that; I should like to emphasize it again. I was myself a Government servant for five years and a little more, a member of the Bureau of Education; and at the latter end of that service I was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to represent that department in an effort to find out what duplications there were in the various portions of the different Government bureaus and departments in this particular field. Unfortunately I resigned before the investigation was completed; but at that time there were some forty officers of the Government functioning one way or another in the educational field, nearly every one of them dealing in some fashion with the educational machinery of the States; and the amount of confusion that is introduced into the operations of the school systems and the other educational agencies by this system of requests from Washington is something that one does not appreciate until he lives in it.

It is also patent that these several divisions of the Government that deal with education have no relation whatsoever with one another and are, for the most part, each ignorant of the other's business. We want to see that enterprise brought together so that what the Government does in education will at least represent a unified point of view and a unified policy. I think that is the first thing we want.

We also want—it has been very effectively presented to you and I will not take your time by elaborating on it—large-scale investigations. May I say just this much in addition to what has been said by those who have preceded me? Any one of this group could name you a dozen problems, probably, on slight reflection, that are strictly national problems. They can not be handled by any local educational agency. Take, for instance, one that is agitating this convention that has been here this

week: What shall be the content of elementary education, and the corollary? What shall be the organization of the elementary and secondary schools? Before they can be settled effectively—and it is one of the major problems of the country, I may say, because it effects all of your children—before it can be settled effectively we need information that we do not have and that no agency can get for us.

What do we do now? When we want a big study of any kind we go to the educational foundations for appropriations. I have spent a considerable number of months of my life begging educational foundations for anywhere from fifty to two hundred thousand dollars for this and that undertaking that the Nation needs; and if we have good luck we get an appropriation, perhaps, adequate to do the job.

There are now two or three national investigations being financed that way, and that is literally our only source. The Bureau of Education does what it can with its very inadequate means. If it had more means it could do more; but there is no central impartial agency except these educational foundations that can do these things that we need to have done. I do not mean to dwell on that aspect of it longer, I am sure Mr. Chairman, but may I just indicate the third thing that we want?

The third thing that we want is leadership. We want the kind of influence that affects the profession and that affects the public. I think I am correct in saying that we are not looking simply for prestige, not looking simply for added dignity because education is involved and that is our business—not that, but after all, when you get large investigating enterprises under way and when you get the facts you really have done but half the thing. The other half is to make those tell, and that is done by large persons and it is certainly advanced by the influential position which the persons may be holding. That is one



thing we certainly need in our profession, and I am one of those who believes that the Nation needs this point of view represented in its general councils.

Certainly education is one of the greatest activities of the Nation, comparable with agriculture, labor, commerce. Certain things stand out about it, and I do not mean simply instruction of children in schools; I mean the whole scientific side of it and the whole idea of it. Those are the things which we think ought to be represented in any enterprise of consideration of Government policy. We think that that is accomplished, and perhaps best accomplished, by a department, by a secretary; and that there is also, if I may answer the objection that was raised a few moments ago—that there is also in this department a stability which you do not get under the present form of organization.

### A NATIONAL QUESTION<sup>6</sup>

I am strongly in favor of the passage at this session of Congress of the education bill, known as S. 291 and H. R. 5000. My reasons for this support are the following:

"1. *Public education has come to be a national question.*—The changing conditions of our civilization make it more and more necessary for the people of the whole country to join together in some sort of common enterprise in order to raise the general level of intelligence among all the people. The increasing ease of communication by means of the newspaper, telegraph, telephone, and radio tends to make all outstanding enterprises an undertaking of the people in any part of the country a matter of common knowledge among all the people in every part of the country. Moreover, the railroads and

<sup>6</sup> From statement of A. T. Allen, state superintendent of public instruction, Raleigh, N.C. United States. Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 333-4. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.

automobiles, by providing cheap and rapid transportation, are causing the people of every State to mingle more and more with the people of all the other parts of the country. Therefore, from the standpoint of bringing about a desirable unification of the people in all the States, the Federal Government must necessarily, from time to time, be more and more interested in public education.

"2. *It would unify the educational efforts of the Federal Government.*—The Federal Government is already engaged in promoting education along several different lines, in a common effort. The education bill contemplates the unification of all these separate enterprises under the direction of the Secretary of Education. This unification of effort, in my opinion, is worthy of the consideration of the members of Congress.

"3. *A Federal department of education would lend dignity to the whole enterprise of public education.*—Under the present arrangement, education is relegated to a mere bureau and lost in the great Department of the Interior. Public education is so fundamental and so essential to the general welfare of the country that it would be worth while to dignify it by placing a representative of this great field of public service in the President's Cabinet.

"4. *It would serve as a clearing house for educational information.*—The statistics that now come out from the Bureau of Education are ordinarily so antiquated that they are of little service to the various States. This, of course, is not the fault of the Bureau of Education. The States themselves are under no compulsion to render reports to the Federal Government, and many of them are very careless in doing so. The matter of compiling up-to-date statistics from all the States would be greatly facilitated.

"Furthermore, section 8 of the bill provides for research of 11 different fields. The research of the Federal board, especially in the field of secondary education and

rural education, has already been of great service to the several States. If the scope of this research work can be widened so as to include other important fields, and if further authority can be given to this department to secure and disseminate information, the States would greatly benefit by these increased facilities. In this way, educational administrators in every part of the country could secure accurate information to indicate new trends in education, and fundamental information on which to evaluate new schemes that are from time to time proposed. In my opinion, this one section of the bill alone, if carried, would be worth all the contemplated expenditure.

"5. *It would greatly stimulate educational effort in all parts of the country.*—When one State finds out that another States is going ahead rapidly along any line of development, it begins at once to consider remedying its own situation, and to determine whether or not it should increase its efforts in this direction. By acquainting the people in different sections with the educational enterprises in other parts of the country, an increasing interest would develop and greatly stimulate the growth of public education.

"6. *No danger of Federal encroachment.*—This bill, as I see it, does not confer any authority on the proposed department of education in Washington to regulate in any way the administration of education in the several States. Each State would continue to be as free as it is now to provide for the education of its own children in its own peculiar way, without let or hindrance from the Federal Government. It could still develop its efforts in public education along any line that might seem wise to it, and the Federal Government, under this bill, could do nothing about it. On the other hand, the information collected and disseminated by the Federal Government as provided in the proposed act would be of great service to the various administrative officers in the States in sug-

gesting to them changes in educational policies and systems. Furthermore, any proposed change would be based on accurate and scientific facts and not merely upon theory."

### SECRETARY IN CABINET<sup>1</sup>

For the first time in nine years, the road is perfectly open for a definite, clear-cut vote on the question now before us: Shall we have a secretary of education in the President's Cabinet?

The question is not complicated in the present bill by any question of Federal subsidies to the States. It is not complicated by the fact that there is before Congress a plan for the reorganization of the executive departments, because the Mapes bill and the corresponding bill in the Senate did not come to the committee in authority to bring in a plan setting up the new department, but only a shifting of the existing bureau and functions; so that the way is perfectly open, the matter is written into the present bill in the form of a department of education, and you have the opportunity to vote on it.

The President of the United States is willing to have a secretary of education sit at his table. So we gentlemen believe that the majority of the people of the United States are in favor of a department of education and are anxious to know also how Congress stands on that matter; and that, in nine years, we have been unable to ascertain because the matter has never been in clear-cut form enough to come to a vote in Congress.

We admit that there is opposition to this measure. It was said when Horace Mann was trying to secure the creation of a State board of education in Massachusetts that the opposition could be divided into three kinds, political opposition, professional opposition, and religious

<sup>1</sup> From statement of Dr. John H. MacCracken, president of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. United States. Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 29-31. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.

opposition. There was opposition which arose from political circumstances and the funds for the local school system as it existed in Massachusetts and as it has existed in most of our States.

There was opposition on the part of the Boston schoolmasters, as there is opposition to-day from many of the leading educators. There was religious opposition because the orthodox did not believe that Horace Mann was orthodox. But you gentlemen of the committee have had sufficient experience in legislation to know that nothing that is worth doing is ever done except in the face of opposition—not even a bipartisan tax bill. And, recognizing this opposition we still believe that education is of such magnitude and importance, so vital to the Republic, that it should have representation in the President's Cabinet.

It has been asked here this morning why we should not simply expand the Bureau of Education by giving it more funds. The first answer to that is that a Commissioner of Education can not get the funds. That has been tried for 60 years, and I think we know that there is no hope of his succeeding in securing any large appropriations from Congress.

In the second place, he can not coordinate the educational activities of the Government which now, according to the Budget division of the expenditures of the Government, represent a total of about \$36,000,000 a year.

In the third place, a bureau chief is not free to counsel directly with the head of the Nation. I recall very well during the war when some of us were going to see President Wilson regarding the educational features of war measures and we asked an admiral of the Navy who was in charge of their educational division to come along with us. He said that he would be very glad to go, but that he could not go without the consent of the Secretary of the Navy. So I asked Mr. Daniels if he would let the admiral go, and he said: "Certainly not, sir."

A bureau chief is not free to act without the consent of the Secretary. A private individual such as myself is more free than a bureau chief to take up with the President of the United States questions of educational policy. And for this reason we feel that we should have a spokesman in the President's Cabinet.

Fourthly, the reason a bureau chief does not answer the purpose is in the matter of international relations. It is inconceivable that education in the United States of America can be represented internationally by a bureau chief, a commissioner of education. It is our policy in the Diplomatic Service with any other country that will provide an ambassador to the United States in return to provide an ambassador from this country. If they provide a minister, we provide a minister. By the same analogy, since the leading nations of the world have secretaries of education, the United States also should have a secretary of education for international relations.

These are arguments which I think are universally admitted. The objections which have been urged to the creation of a secretary of education are largely objections founded on the fear of what might happen. As for myself, I would say with Patrick Henry, I have no lamp by which my feet are guided but the lamp of experience; and I believe that a secretary of education could do for the National Government just what Horace Mann did for education as secretary of the State Board of Education of Massachusetts.

What Horace Mann did is described as follows: He called upon the people of all classes, as with the voice of a herald, to raise their estimate of public instruction and to provide better facilities by which it could be furnished. He devised or adapted new educational agencies and persuaded the people to use them. He organized public opinion and influenced the action of legislatures. He gave men higher ideas of the work and character of the teacher at the same time that he taught the teacher to

magnify his office. He heightened the popular estimate of the instruments that are conducive and necessary to the existence of good schools. He elevated men's ideas of the value of ethical training and made valuable suggestions looking to its prosecution. But his great theme was the relation of intellectual moral knowledge to human well being, individual and social. Here his faith never faltered, his ardors never cooled. In no other name did he trust for the safety of society. A confirmed rationalist he looked with supreme confidence to the healing power of popular intelligence and virtue.

No one of these things done by Horace Mann but could be done in greater degree by a national secretary of education. No one of them came from the power of compulsion given by law, nor from the power of cash placed in his hands by appropriation. When the strength of the opposition fixed the salary of the secretary of the State board of education at \$1,500 instead of at the \$3,000 expected, with no allowance for office rent, traveling expenses, or incidentals, Horace Mann's comment was, "Well, one thing is certain; I will be revenged on them. I will do them more than \$1,500 worth of good"; and he made good his threat. When it was suggested law might attain his ends, he answered, "The education of the whole people in a republican government can never be attained without the consent of the whole people. Compulsion, even if it were desirable, is not an available instrument. Enlightenment, not coercion, is our resource."





## NEGATIVE DISCUSSION

### PARTICIPATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION<sup>1</sup>

For a decade, and with especial vehemence since the war, a nation-wide propaganda has been carried on looking toward the gradual transfer of responsibility for the support and control of our public schools from the state and local unit within the state, to the Federal Government at Washington.

If we travel this road we shall end with a great bureaucratic machine at Washington having its Secretary of Education in the Cabinet, its Assistant Secretaries of Education, and a horde of bureau chiefs and clerks and three-quarters of a million of Federal employees teaching in the schools and bossed by several thousand field inspectors, supervisors, and other petty traveling officials.

This nation-wide propaganda succeeded in 1917 in securing the passage of its first bill and created at Washington a special Federal Board to control vocational education. This National Vocational Board is now operating from Washington, disbursing Federal money, laying down regulations, controlling, inspecting, and dictating the manner in which vocational education shall be carried on by the states, the cities and towns, and other local educational units.

The Constitution does not mention education, and nowhere gives the Federal Government authority to direct or control education. As this power was not reserved by

<sup>1</sup> From Chamber of Commerce of the United States. Majority report of Special Committee on Education. 110p. Washington, D.C. November 20, 1922.

the Constitution to the Federal Government, it is clear that the framers of the Constitution deliberately intended to vest in the states the power to establish, maintain, conduct, and control education. This does not mean that the framers of this Federal democracy failed to realize the importance of education, but that like many other activities vital to the welfare of our people they believed education could be carried on with better regard to the interests and wishes of the people, with better adaptation to local needs, and with greater efficiency and more economy if left to the states than if it should be federalized and so controlled and conducted by Federal officers located at the National Capital.

Great is the danger of handing the power of controlling the ideas and ideals of the growing generation to a group of bureaucrats located far away at the seat of government.

They may willfully do great damage. They may unwittingly sow seed on a nation-wide scale which will fructify only after many quiet years of germination so that the noxious weeds can perhaps be eradicated only by the slow growth of public reaction after grievous injury to our body politic.

Germany to her ruin and sorrow has reaped her harvest from seeds quietly sown in her schools for many years by the Berlin bureaucracy. The world's history is strewn with the wreck of governments whose disintegration began when the people saw the local control of their dearest concerns taken away and concentrated in the hands of a bureaucracy at the seat of empire. The creators of our Federal Government clearly foresaw and wisely undertook to protect us from the inefficiency and the dangers of over-centralization.

The genius of our people should and must control our schools. There is nowhere else to place this trust. But if our people are to control our schools and to cause them to be sensitive to their ideals, to their varying needs from

year to year and from locality to locality, those in charge must be near them, accessible to them, and responsive to them. A vote once in two or six years for a member of Congress or a Senator who is to live at the seat of government far from home, and who must be elected to attend to a hundred other things and can therefore rarely be elected on an educational issue, coupled with the rigidity which would almost certainly be attained by the managing bureaucracy at Washington, would make our school system about as sensitive and responsive to the average man as a ton of pig iron to a tack hammer.

Moreover, if our government is to survive, if these 100,000,000 people, soon to become 200,000,000 people, made up of racial stocks from many countries, embodying many varying degrees and forms of civilization, and of governing knowledge or rather lack of knowledge of self-government, are to succeed in maintaining and carrying on this great Federal democracy, it will only be by the constant practice of local self-government in things which vitally concern them. Our people should have constant practice in critical local affairs, in affairs which are not matters of comparative indifference but of such vital consequence that the people of the community will be hurt, and seriously hurt, if they are not conducted properly. These alone will teach each succeeding generation and the millions of less experienced people arriving from foreign shores what good government is, what bad government is, and how to secure the former.

The doctrine of self help, the idea that the things we get for ourselves are the best things we possess, that sturdily striving to care for ourselves builds character and citizenship, seems recently to have evaporated from the minds of many. They seem to think that each local group of American citizens should stand around like a Greek chorus waiting for the gods at Washington to make the next event happen.

Not only has there been a notable increase in the

quantity of education given our children since 1870, but even more notable has been the improvement in the quality of our schools; better teachers, better textbooks, better methods of instruction, better buildings and equipment; the whole spirit of our public school instruction has been revolutionized in the past fifty years, or even within the past two decades. Within a brief period of time we have seen the real development of the kindergarten, a new science of educational psychology with less emphasis upon learning from books and more emphasis upon learning by doing, the introduction of manual training, of drawing, of music, school gardens, playgrounds, and a multitude of other improvements in educational methods. It is safe to say that public education within the past two decades has made more rapid progress than for any corresponding period in the history of American education. In many respects within recent years the American school system has become the center of educational interest for the world.

The development of public education in this country has gone steadily forward in spite of certain serious obstacles to educational progress.

Chief among these obstacles should be mentioned the following facts: (1) that the South did not recover from the Civil War until toward the end of the 19th century; (2) that the enfranchisement of nearly four million negro slaves thrust upon the South and upon the country a tremendous educational problem; (3) that the constant stream of immigrants, particularly from Eastern and Southern Europe, presented educational problems of great magnitude.

It should be noted also that many of the defects which we now recognize in our system of public education are defects of which we have become conscious only within the last few years. Some of the defects were not clear to the American people until the disclosures of the selective draft. Other defects have been disclosed only within

recent years as improved methods of educational analysis have been available and as comprehensive surveys and intensive investigations have brought to light conditions which may have been familiar to specialists in education, but which were not known to people in general.

It is further to be noted that within the last few years the science of education has developed far higher standards for education and that it is unfair to indict states and communities for failure to reach right away educational standards which have been raised markedly within a short time.

Never have the states and communities been so alive to the needs of education and so ready to meet those needs as at the present time.

These attacks are based largely upon conditions which came to light or received new emphasis as the result of our war experiences, and the charges are as follows:

1. The illiteracy of our people.
2. Failure to Americanize the foreign-born population.
3. Low physical standard of our population.
4. Inadequate rural schools.
5. Shortage of teachers.
6. Low salaries of teachers.
7. Poor quality of teachers.

The attack along these lines has been developed by what we think may be described as the "shock" method.

Some of these conditions, like the acute shortage of teachers, applied to every line of public and private activity and were temporary in their nature and are now fast approaching, if not already back, to normal. The war unquestionably also did reveal to us in education as in other directions weaknesses which should be attended to and mended as soon as possible.

We must maintain, however, our perspective as to these things, and we want to say at the outset that the war also revealed, in a way that inspired the soul of

every American citizen, the essential vigor and strength of the American people and the soundness of American institutions. It established that, despite a recent Civil War, and despite the many alien and polyglot elements of which our population is composed, there was a national consciousness, intense, united, and vigorous, certainly not surpassed by any other belligerent nation. The intelligence, resourcefulness, and skill of our men in the field, and of the men and women in the workshops and civilian war activities, bore eloquent witness to the general soundness of the educational training of our people.

The number of illiterates in this country is not increasing, as stated by Congressman Towner. Not only has the percentage of illiteracy decreased, as we have already noted, but the actual number of illiterates has decreased substantially in every decade. The census figures since 1890 are as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Illiterates</i>	<i>Per Cent of Total Population</i>
1890	6,324,702	13.3
1900	6,180,069	10.7
1910	5,516,163	7.7
1920	4,931,905	6.0

The percentage of illiteracy is not 20 per cent, as stated in Dr. Strayer's resolution. According to the 1920 census it is 6 per cent.

There have been so many erroneous conclusions based upon the psychological tests given in the Army that it has become essential to carefully analyze the data.

It will be seen from this official statement<sup>2</sup> that strictly speaking there was no examination for literacy in the drafted army. About fifteen hundred thousand men were given psychological tests and were divided for that purpose into two groups:—those who were supposed to be able to read and write English readily enough to

<sup>2</sup> Official Report of the Division of Psychology of the Office of the Surgeon-General, published with the approval of the Department of War. Chapter 9, p. 743†.

answer questions in a very short time, measured by a stop-watch; and those whose knowledge was presumably insufficient for that kind of examination. In some camps the men were asked if they could read newspapers and write letters in English; in other camps they were asked if they had finished four, six, or even seven grades in school. For three of the camps no basis for the testing of literacy was reported. The other camps varied from the third grade standard, as in Camp Wadsworth, to seventh grade standard, as in Camp Wheeler and in Camp Grant, in the latter camp this meaning ability to "read and write rapidly." In seven camps the standard was not defined in terms of school grades but solely as "read and write," meaning sufficient facility in reading newspapers and writing letters home in English to satisfy the particular examining officer. In a number of cases the standard was changed during the period covered by the statistics, though the number of men examined on each of the respective bases is not stated. The tests were so far from being uniform that they hardly warrant a definite conclusion.

It is also true that the men submitted to these psychological tests did not accurately represent our general population for four reasons. First, they were all men from twenty-one to thirty-one years of age, and the 1920 census shows that in this age-group there exists even among natives an illiteracy rate at least twice as great as that of the general average of the total population if we go down to children over ten, because of the steady improvement in our schools. Second, because so many immigrants to this country come at about the age of twenty, and moreover a large proportion of them are males, so that the proportion of foreign-born men of military age is much greater than among the population at large. Third, there were 1,400,000 volunteers. Fourth, there were hundreds of thousands of men excused from the draft on account of being public officials

or ministers or students or indispensable employees in war industries, and there can be no doubt that the amount of illiteracy among these men was much less than that in the drafted group.

The Army tests did bring home to us, however, that a distressingly large proportion of our population must still be classified as "less literate"—the term used in the Army report—but that is not the same as illiterate and its definition is far from being clear.

We cannot accurately comprehend the literacy situation without further analysis.

There are really three distinct problems involved—the native white population, negro population, and foreign-born population.

The number of native white illiterates has decreased steadily and rapidly since 1880. Whereas in 1880 out of every thousand native whites ten years old and over, eighty-seven were illiterate, in 1920 only twenty were illiterate. During the past decade the percentage of illiteracy decreased in every single state except those which had already reached in 1910 what is virtually an irreducible minimum—less than one-half of one per cent.

Although the illiteracy rate in several of the Southern and Southwestern States is considerably above the average for the country as a whole, rapid progress is being made by the educational systems of these states in reducing illiteracy. Certainly the record does not indicate failure of the present state educational systems.

The various subjects that we have just reviewed give the basis of the argument made by the advocates of the Sterling-Towner Bill that Federal aid is urgently needed to protect the nation against the "threatened breakdown of our present educational system."

We find that the picture of the shortcomings of our educational system is in many respects exaggerated, in other cases inadequately analyzed. We find great interest and great activity on the part of the states. The impor-



tant question in considering the criticisms of our public school system that really have merit, such as the condition of the rural schools, inadequate compensation of school teachers, lack of preparation of teachers, is to know whether we are making substantial progress on these difficult problems under the present system. Looking at the situation historically instead of by the "shock" method, and discounting passing war conditions, we find that although we are still far from what we should attain, enormous progress has been made, especially in the past decade. We think it is clear that our present educational system has not failed and that there is no reason for scrapping it and no adequate reason for putting the Federal government into our public schools, or for appropriating today one hundred million dollars of Federal money.

#### DANGER OF FEDERALIZATION TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The federalization of our schools would be the worst possible thing for educational progress in this country. The danger to education has been well presented by President Butler of Columbia University.

So far as education is concerned, there has been over-organization for a long time past. Too many persons are engaged in supervising in inspecting and in recording the work of other persons. There is too much machinery, and in consequence a steady temptation to lay more stress upon the form of education than upon its content. Statistics displace scholarship. There are, in addition, too many laws and too precise laws, and not enough opportunity for those mistakes and failures, due to individual initiative and experiments, which are the foundation for great and lasting success.

It is now proposed to bureaucratize and to bring into uniformity the educational system of the whole United States, while making the most solemn assurance that nothing of the kind is intended. The glory and the success of education in the United States are due to its freedom, to its unevennesses, to its reflection of the needs and ambition and capacities of local communities, and to its being kept in close and constant touch with the people themselves. There is not money enough in the United

States, even if every dollar of it were expended on education, to produce by Federal authority or through what is naively called coöperation between the Federal Government and the several states, educational results that would be at all comparable with those that have already been reached under the free and natural system that has grown up among us. If tax-supported education be first encouraged and inspected, and then little by little completely controlled by central authority, European experience shows precisely what will happen. In so far as the schools of France are controlled from the Ministry of Education in Paris, they tend to harden into uniform machines, and it is only when freedom is given to different types of schools, or to different localities, that any real progress is made. Anything worse than the system which has prevailed in Prussia would be difficult to imagine. It is universally acknowledged that the unhappy decline in German university freedom and effectiveness, and the equally unhappy subjection of the educated classes to the dictates of the political and military ruling groups, were the direct result of the highly centralized and efficient control from Berlin of the nation's schools and universities. For Americans now to accept oversight and direction of their tax-supported schools and colleges from Washington would mean that they had failed to learn one of the plainest and most weighty lessons of the war. It is true that education is a national problem and a national responsibility; it is also true that it has been characteristic of the American people to solve their most difficult national problems and to bear their heaviest national responsibilities through their own action in the field of liberty rather than through the agency of organized government. Once more to tap the federal treasury under the guise of aiding the states, and once more to establish an army of bureaucrats in Washington and another army of inspectors roaming at large throughout the land, will not only fail to accomplish any permanent improvements in the education of our people, but it will assist in effecting so great a revolution in our American form of government as one day to endanger its perpetuity. Illiteracy will not be sensibly diminished if at all, by federal appropriations, nor will the physical health of the people be thereby improved. The major portion of any appropriation that may be made will certainly be swallowed up in meeting the cost of doing ill that which should not be done at all. The true path of advance in education is to be found in the direction of keeping the people's schools closely in touch with the people themselves. Bureaucrats and experts will speedily take the life out of even the best schools and reduce them to dried and mounted specimens of pedagogic fatuity. Unless the school is both the work and the pride of the community which it serves, it is nothing. A school system that grows naturally in response to the needs and ambitions of a hundred thousand different localities, will be a better school system than any which can be imposed upon those localities by the aid of grants of public money

from the federal treasury, accompanied by federal regulations, federal inspections, federal reports and federal uniformities.—*Columbia University Annual Report of the President, 1921*, p. 21-2.

We conclude the discussion of Federal participation in public school education with the closing words of the notable address of President Kinley, made last December on the occasion of his installation as President of the University of Illinois:

The most important question of internal administration before the American people today is whether or not this onward sweep of Federal control over the details of their local affairs shall go on. The part of that question which we are considering today is whether it is advisable to permit it to include our education. Shall we accept the doctrine that we are destined to become a great continental democracy, governed in all important public activities from Washington, or shall we try to preserve the local autonomy in communities and States which is necessary to the preservation of our liberties? If we accept the doctrine that it is well to become a continental democracy, there is no need of further discussion, and State governments may as well be abandoned. If we do not accept that doctrine, but stand up against the present tendency, we should keep our State governments in substance and not merely in form. Above all, we should keep our education out of Federal bureaucratic control.—*University of Illinois Bulletin, December 26, 1921, p. 46.*

#### DO WE NEED A FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

The second question referred to the committee for consideration is the coördination of the educational activities of the government. This question calls for a discussion of the proposal in the Sterling-Towner Bill to establish a Department of Education with a Secretary in the Cabinet. The bill provides \$500,000 for the first year's expenses of the new Department, and provides (Section 5)—

that it shall be the duty of the Department of Education to conduct studies and investigations in the field of education and report thereon.

Research shall be undertaken in:

- (a) Illiteracy;
- (b) Immigrant education;
- (c) Public school education, and especially rural education;

- (d) Physical education, including health education, recreation, and sanitation;
- (e) Preparation and supply of competent teachers for the public schools, higher education, and in such other fields as in the judgment of the Secretary of Education may require attention and study.

It is provided by Section 3 that there is to be transferred to the Department of Education the Bureau of Education and such other offices, bureaus, and branches of the government as Congress may determine, to be administered by the Department of Education.

The proposals for the establishment of a Bureau of Education date from 1864. In 1866 it was the subject of a memorial presented to Congress by the National Association of State and City School Superintendents, and in 1867 an Act was passed establishing a National Department of Education, with an appropriation of \$18,676, and a staff of four employees. The appropriation bill of July 20, 1868, declared that "the Department of Education shall cease from and after the 30th day of June, 1869," and in its stead a Bureau of Education was created and attached to the Department of the Interior. The purpose of the bureau was stated to be:

To collect (quoting Section 516) statistics and facts showing the condition and progress of education in the several states and territories and to diffuse such information respecting the organization and management of schools and school systems and methods of teaching as shall aid the people of the United States in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems, and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country.—*Act of July 20, 1868, ch. 176, 15 Stat. L. 92, 106.*

The appropriation by the Bureau has grown from the \$8,550 provided in 1870 to \$162,045 in 1921. Although there is a tendency on the part of the proponents of Federal participation to belittle the work of the Bureau, yet when the Bureau has possessed at its head an educational leader it has played a useful part in the development of education, and any review of educational development in the past fifty years must give an honorable place to Henry Barnard and William T. Harris.

The principal arguments advanced for the creation of a Department of Education with a Cabinet officer at its head are:

- First:* That it would give to education due "recognition" of its importance and dignity in the life of the nation;
- Second:* That it would furnish educational leadership to the nation;
- Third:* That it would coördinate and give more effective administration to the many educational activities now conducted by the various departments of the Federal Government.

It is claimed that in the United States public education suffers because it lacks the prestige of being represented in the Cabinet, whereas the cabinets of most nations contain a Minister of Public Instruction. There is hardly an analogy here, however, because the Federal Government of the United States is something unknown among European nations which are highly centralized and where education is administered by the nation. The Minister of Education is the administrative officer in charge of the administration of education throughout the nation. It can hardly be seriously argued, however, that because there is no Secretary of Education in the Cabinet the people of the United States are more indifferent than other nations to the importance of education. It is common observation that there is no country in which education has a more vital hold upon the conscience and minds of the people than in the United States.

With reference to the furnishing of educational leadership, it seems that this is more a question of personality and of creation of ideals than of official position. The great leaders in the history of education have perhaps occasionally held official positions but more often not.

The putting of a Secretary of Education into the Cabinet necessarily means putting the interests of educa-

tion into national politics. This is inevitable, and as bearing upon this point it is interesting to notice that in the fifty-four years since the Bureau of Education was established there have been but six commissioners, as follows:

Henry Barnard .....	1867-1870
John Eaton .....	1870-1886
Nathaniel H. R. Dawson .....	1886-1889
William T. Harris .....	1889-1906
Elmer Ellsworth Brown .....	1906-1911
Philander Priestly Claxton .....	1911-1921
John James Tigert. ....	1921-

Cabinet officers are chosen from the party in power. Under a Democratic administration there will be a Democratic Secretary of Education, and under a Republican administration the Secretary of Education must be a Republican. The average tenure of office of a Cabinet officer during the period since 1861 has been two years and eight months. This indicates one of the difficulties which will be involved in seeking to increase the prestige of education by changing it from a bureau to a department.

There is a serious question, also, whether it is advisable to add further to the size of the Cabinet. The President has already proposed the creation of a new department, with a Secretary in the Cabinet, to be known as the Department of Public Welfare. In the draft of the bill presented by Senator Kenyon, it is proposed that there should be a Division of Education under this new department. Further discussion of the proposal, we understand, is awaiting the report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Government Activities. If it is considered necessary to add another member to the Cabinet, it would seem on the whole preferable that it should be a Department of Public Welfare along the lines recommended by the President, because if a Department of Education is created it is likely that there will be further departments created to represent other branches of public welfare, representing public health, for ex-

ample, and perhaps eventually other social welfare activities.

Our review of the proposals for Federal participation in education and for the creation of a Department of Education has shown clearly the necessity for more comprehensive study and a deeper and sounder analysis of the educational problems of the nation, and one devoid of propaganda and the sensationalism which mark the present discussion. We believe it is desirable that there be substantial increase in the appropriation for the present Bureau of Education to make it possible for educational research to be conducted on a larger scale and for a greater degree of leadership to be furnished to educational effort, especially in the more backward states. However, instead of increasing the appropriation of the bureau at one jump from \$162,000 to \$500,000 it will undoubtedly be more effective to make the increase gradually, and the increased appropriation should be based upon definite proposals for the expenditure of the money, which is one of the conspicuous defects of the proposal in the present bill for the appropriation of \$500,000 for the proposed Department of Education.

### SHALL WE PRUSSIANIZE AMERICAN EDUCATION?\*

In his interesting and clever but superficial and misleading book, "The Goose Step," Mr. Upton Sinclair maintains that American colleges and universities all march to the tunes played by masters of finance and captains of industry. "The Gosling" deals with the same author's belief that such influences pervade the common schools also. As a teacher for a quarter century in public and private schools, colleges and universities in vari-

\* By Milledge L. Bonham, Jr., Hamilton College. *School and Society*. 22:620-2. November 14, 1925.

ous parts of the country, I am convinced that Mr. Sinclair overstates the case. He has generalized too broadly and too hastily. Some of the defects he points out can be found in all colleges and schools; all of them may be found in one institution or another, but all of them do not exist in every college and school. However, his belief that American education is Prussianized stands an excellent chance of becoming a fact if the efforts of President Coolidge, the National Education Association and various others are successful. I refer, of course, to the plan to have Congress establish a department of education with a cabinet officer at its head.

Mr. Coolidge evidently letteth not his left hand know what his right hand doeth. With his left he writes an address decrying the tendency towards centralization, urging the states not to let the federal government absorb their functions; with his right he pens a message to Congress urging the establishment of a secretary of education. Logically, his next move should be to endow a Bryan-Darwin chair of biology-theology. It is obvious that a department of education will have more authority, more prestige and more funds than a bureau of education. Its inevitable tendency will be to assert more authority, exert greater influence and gradually acquire more and more control over the schools of the country. This can be done only by the diminution of the control of the states over their educational systems, the direction of public schools becoming more and more centralized in Washington.

Once, in Cologne, I found myself before a *gymnasium*. Inquiring my way to the director's office, I told him that I was an American teacher and would like to visit his school. He asked whether I wished merely to see the building or desired to see the classes at work. Naturally I replied, "Both". He told me that if I would be satisfied with inspecting the building, I could obtain permission from the director of the city schools to do so, but if I



wanted to see classes at work I must secure leave from the ministry of education at Berlin. Would you care to see American schools so cribbed, cabined and confined? So carefully "protected" from the visits of parents, taxpayers, and other interested persons? To me, it appears that the establishment of a federal department of education is a step in this direction.

No large organization, obviously, can be administered without practical uniformity throughout the units, whether it be Federal Reserve banks, ten-cent stores, K. K. K. dens or shoe factories. As a teacher, and especially a teacher of history, judging the future in the light of the past, I am daily more and more convinced that an attempt at absolute uniformity in the treatment of humans is foolish and wicked. There is no one best method in education, either for all teachers or for all students. The wise teacher uses different methods with different subjects, with different pupils, in teaching the same subject to different students. What is the best method in one teacher's hands may be the worst in another's. All this is as obvious as that roses do not look like sunflowers or smell like honeysuckle, yet it appears to be ignored by the advocates of a department of education. Apparently they forget not only the tendency of the federal government to absorb more and more of local functions, but also the equally strong tendency of a government department to become a slave to routine and uniformity, to prefer monotony to originality.

In such a country as ours, with its diversity of population and industry, its varied geographical influences, uniform "standardization" is thoroughly vicious in education, as it would be in agriculture, as it is in Childs restaurants. It is very convenient to be able to get the same spark plug at any garage from Key West to Seattle, but to find the school children of San Diego, Cheyenne, Nashville and Pittsburgh identical with those of Boston would be as disheartening as to have to read the Congressional

Record regularly. Nebraska, with its largely agricultural population, has different educational needs from an industrial state like Massachusetts. California, with its large Asiatic population, Mississippi with its large Negro population, Minnesota, with large Scandinavian element, have decidedly different educational problems from say New Hampshire. It goes without saying that each should be left to find its own solution for these problems. Those who favor a department of education will say that it will not be the policy of the department to control the states, merely to advise them; that surely it will not offer the same plan to all states, but will have one for the commercial, another for the industrial, a third for the agricultural, a fourth for the mining etc. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*; who pays the piper calls the tune—and every other *cliché* you can think of in rebuttal. Seeing a federal department with much money to spend on school improvements, every state will begin clamoring for such aid. To secure this they must comply with whatever conditions the federal government prescribes. The bureaucratic mind automatically tends to simplify its work by imposing rigid uniformity, like a mail order house. *Uniformity in education tends inexorably to stagnation.* To take one glaring example: the graduates of our national military and naval academies, however skilful they may be as specialists in the science of war—and that is open to doubt—because of the absolutely identical training they have all received, compare unfavorably with a group of equal size taken from the graduates of any good liberal arts college. Originality is frowned upon; conformity is at a premium; witness the case of General Mitchell and the air service. So let me urge every advocate of a department of education in the cabinet to reread and ponder prayerfully Dickens's "Hard Times," before urging his Congressman to support the bill for such a department. We do not want our children goose-stepping to the orders of Gradgrinds.

The story is perhaps apocryphal of a city superintendent who boasted—boasted, God save the mark!—that at a given moment he could tell exactly what word was being spelled in every schoolroom in the city! Apocryphal or not, it illustrates the danger of nationalization of public schools. The establishment of a secretary of education will be the first step towards nationalization.

If there is one point upon which all except the ward bosses, are agreed it is that politics should have no place in our schools. Put a cabinet officer in charge of them and you can no more keep politics out of them than out of the post office or Tammany Hall. It stands to reason that a cabinet officer must be of the same political party as his chief, or he will be of little use to the President. That officer is unquestionably entitled to the assurance that his official advisors think as he does on all major governmental questions. As a corollary, the holders of the various portfolios change as the party in power changes, often when a President succeeds another of the same party. Imagine Mr. Coolidge trying to conduct the national business with a free-trade Democratic secretary of treasury! That would make the head of a bootlegger swim. So if we should have a secretary of education, he would be changed every four or eight years. Granted that we desire a *national* educational policy, such a process would be fatal to any continuity, as it has been with tariff problems, conservation and the like. Since we do not—at least I do not—want a *national* educational policy, why add to our expenses by establishing an officer who can not be allowed to develop any policy and whose frequent change will upset the routine of the legitimate functions of the present Bureau of Education? But whether I want it or not, if we establish a cabinet department of education and put anybody but a fossil or a jellyfish at its head, we assuredly will find a policy developing, and that will be changed with each administration. From the establishment of the bureau (which began by being a

department and reverted soon to bureau status), it has been the practice to keep a commissioner of education in office, regardless of his party affiliations. I do not know the party—if any—of the present commissioner and doubt if the President who appointed him knew. This is quite proper. The commissioner is an administrative officer, not an executive, so need not concern himself with politics, but can devote all his attention to carrying out the laws concerning his bureau.<sup>4</sup> Make him a cabinet officer, and *ipso facto* he becomes an executive officer and must reflect the politics of the President. Not only will our schools become Prussianized, but their sergeants and corporals will be changed every few years for raw recruits enlisted at the behest of “the good of the party.” A moment’s reflection will show what the effect upon the schools will be. Do *you* want *your* children taught by beneficiaries of the spoils system? In the language of the editor of the *Utica Press*: “When the schools become an appendage of party politics the people may bid good-bye to efficiency.”

To be sure, proponents of a department of education will be considered for the post of secretary and “such a person will not be subject to political influences.” Perhaps—let us hope so. But the risk is very great. Most of the state superintendents or commissioners and of the city superintendents have been experienced educators of high ability and men and women of fine character. Yet again and again such a person has either been forced out of office for political reasons, or has had to make some concessions to party politics. This is not universally true, but with an official having the enormous range a national secretary of education would have, the price would be too tempting for the party organization to ignore. Imagine a Fall, a Bryan or a Daugherty as secretary of education!

Some claim that as a matter of “dignity,” of prestige,

<sup>4</sup> This applies with equal force to the postoffice. I should like to see the postoffice-general removed from the cabinet and made a purely administrative office.

the importance of education demands that our national expert in education be a cabinet officer instead of a mere bureau chief, in order that he may correspond to the minister of public instruction of most European cabinets. There are several replies to this, of which only two need concern us here. Though in passing, it may be remarked that the frequency with which European cabinets change is certainly no argument for entrusting education to cabinet control. Conditions in America differ so radically from those in most European countries that their practice is not necessarily a safe precedent for us to follow. In some cases, it is a warning of what we should avoid. As to dignity, it is not the title nor even the office which confers the dignity, but the functions of the position and the character of the administrator. A Henry Barnard or a W. T. Harris would have lent distinction to any office, and as commissioners of education they enjoyed a world-wide reputation which would not have been enhanced by making cabinet officers of them. Have Balfour and Asquith gained anything in greatness of soul or even in influence by becoming earls? Did Gladstone lose any dignity by declining a peerage? Is "His Magnificence the Rector of the University of Prague" by virtue of that title a greater educator, a more useful citizen than Miss Martha Berry? Horace Mann made his reputation and did his most constructive work as the clerk of a state board of education. Very few recall that he was ever a college president.

It is also advanced as an argument for a department of education that it is not fair that so important a subject be subordinated to any other department, as the bureau of education is now a mere branch of the Department of the Interior. The obvious remedy for this situation is not to make the commissioner a cabinet officer, but to remove the bureau from the Department of the Interior and put it on a parity with such organizations as the Interstate Commerce Commission, etc. Then it would be suffi-

ciently independent of every department and could be kept out of politics. Also it would not be necessary to increase either the authority of the commissioner or the expenses of his bureau. In any event, it seems wiser to try this experiment rather than to incur the risk of Prussianizing our schools by creating a secretary of education.

### TEACHERS BONUS BILL<sup>5</sup>

The advocacy in our country of a department of education headed by a cabinet officer is no new thing. It has been discussed almost from the founding of the office of Commissioner of Education in 1867. The earlier advocates of the notion pointed to European ministers of education as splendid examples of the system, and particularly to Prussia. The low rate of illiteracy, the high general average of the schools, the efficiency of the state-trained teachers were all dwelt upon as notable illustrations of what could be accomplished by a state-directed system of education. This argument has not been popular in recent years. The Prussian centralized system proved in time a little too efficient. Starting with admirable measures for general and technical education, it ultimately gained complete control of the minds and of the consciences of Prussian children, and transformed religion itself into a glorified worship of the State.

The objections to a centralized department of education lie in the very ideals of our democracy. It is not in the interest of the whole body of people in the various states and communities to take the risk that inheres in the establishment of a central department of education intrusted with large (and no doubt evergrowing) subsidies. No one believes that a secretary of education in our country would be in a position to carry out the educational regime that made Prussia, through its schools, the most

<sup>5</sup> From pamphlet by Henry S. Pritchett, president Carnegie Foundation. p. 5-11. New York. 1924.

highly disciplined but the most subservient people in Europe. On the other hand, no one can doubt, in the light of the history of such centralized agencies, that a department at Washington would tend more and more toward bureaucratic control of education, that it would use its subsidies to promote its own educational theories, and that its influence would in time run counter to the free normal development of American citizenship. Even if one could feel assured that illiteracy would be banished and hygiene taught to all the children through the labors of such a centralized department, he would still hesitate to attempt these results through centralization in education. But who can be sure that the secretary of education, even with his subsidies, can compass these results any faster or any better than they are being accomplished by the states and communities working in their own way and on their own responsibility? European centralized departments of education have never yet succeeded in banishing illiteracy. France has perhaps the most highly centralized department of education, but recent examinations of the men called to the colors have shown an astonishing illiteracy. We are making steady progress in these matters. Our government is founded on the conception that education is primarily an obligation resting on the states and their communities. This is sound democratic reasoning based on long experience. Do we wish to adopt the undemocratic plan of centralized education, with its risks and its doubtful advantages?

The sentimental appeal by the representatives of the National Education Association that education is belittled because the nation spends money on hog cholera, or agriculture, or commerce, but has no national department of education is based on a misconception of that which government can and ought to do. This plea is precisely like the movement of forty years ago to put "God into the Constitution." A secretary of religion with subsidies for ministers, priests and rabbis might be urged upon the

same ground, and in time this may come about if the ministers, priests and rabbis can organize with an energetic "legislative division." Education is not to be made honorable by a cabinet officer and a subsidy. It will be honored in just such proportion as it is sincere, thorough, and wise, and fitted to the varying needs of each community.

When one considers this complicated measure from the standpoint of the education of the whole people he finds in it weaknesses no less serious for the cause of education than for that of democratic ideals.

The history of European countries has shown both the strength and the danger of the centralized bureau of education in autocratic countries. What can a national bureau of education do, and what ought it to do, for a democracy scattered over a continent of infinite diversities, made up of free self-governing commonwealths? These commonwealths vary enormously in population, in area, in industry. The most populous has ten million inhabitants, the least populous contains seventy thousand people scattered over an area half as large as France. A centralized national bureau of education for this union of states so diverse in their problems and needs cannot possibly undertake the role of similar departments in the smaller, compact, closely-administered European states.

This bill assumes that the secretary of education will scrutinize, study and develop their diverse educational needs better than the states and their communities.

This assumption is, in my judgment, unfounded. The states and communities will avail themselves of any monies the secretary can hand out and they will go far to meet his conditions. They will balk at taking his advice, and they will resent his criticism, if it be sufficiently explicit to be of real value. This has been illustrated in the history of the present national Bureau of Education. That Bureau has been of great service as a source of educa-



tional information. Its educational statistics met a distinct need. Some years ago it undertook to exercise the function of educational critic. A report on colleges, comparing institutions in different sections of the country, was prepared. When it became known that this report made discriminating comparisons between institutions in different sections of the country an energetic and effective protest was made. The report still slumbers on the shelves of the Commissioner of Education. The conception of a secretary of education in the role of national critic can be realized in Germany, or France, or Austria, but not in democratic America. The great service a national agency of education can render is in the furnishing of accurate, significant and fruitful information, statistical and otherwise. This can be done by the present Bureau of the Commissioner of Education, if properly manned and supported, far better than by a politically-appointed cabinet officer. There are some things that can be done in an autocratic government that cannot be done, and had best not be attempted, in a democracy. The standardization of education by a central department of education is one of them.

A democracy does not need, nor does it desire, a uniform standardized system of education. It is in the interest of the public good that schools and colleges should have a local individual development, that they minister to the needs and aspirations of their communities. We see already too strong a tendency to have every college duplicate every other college and every high school imitate every other high school. That which a centralized department of education can do for the schools of the country belongs to the machinery of organization. Education needs today not more organization but less. It needs to revive respect and regard for the relation of teacher and pupil, and to put sincerity and thoroughness above organized curricula.

The essential educational weakness of the measure

lies in the fact that those who propose it are thinking neither of the country nor yet of education in the deeper sense, but of particular pedagogic tasks—the teaching of illiterates, instruction in hygiene, the better training of teachers. These things are important, but there is another consideration far more important. A country does not exist for its schools. It does not exist for its government. On the contrary, both the schools and the government exist for the people. What matters chiefly is that the quality of human life shall be high. The schools exist that the quality of human life of the American people may be high, that their children may be taught to think and that they may learn to use freedom wisely. These things cannot be compassed by organization, they cannot be brought into a community by a distant government bureau, they must arise out of the strivings of the community itself. This is of the very essence of democratic government, a conception of which we constantly talk, but whose methods we are only too ready to reject in favor of some short cut. There are no short cuts that are not dangerous to civil and intellectual liberty.

Whether one study this bill from the standpoint of public policy or from that of public education he cannot fail to see that it contains grave risks and promises doubtful gains.

### SHALL EDUCATION BE FEDERALIZED? <sup>6</sup>

The Education Bill (Sterling-Reed Bill) should be studied in the light of recent tendencies in legislation toward increasing federal control in education. Measures of this sort have been based upon a bare generality in the Preamble to the Constitution in Article 1, Section 8:1 which gives Congress power to promote the “general welfare” and to dispose of property belonging to the

<sup>6</sup> From article by J. Henry Harms, D.D. *Lutheran Quarterly*. 55:63-77. January, 1925.

United States. To construe these references as a delegation of power to control public education, in a specific way, as contemplated in the Sterling-Reed Bill, would jeopardize two cardinal principles of our constitutional system, first the principle of limited power, and second, the principle of the division of powers as between the States and the central government. And, indeed, the fact is, they have already been jeopardized by measures adopted since 1914 such as the Smith-Lever Act and the Smith-Hughes Act. And the question is whether we as a nation are satisfied to allow our government to grow more and more imperialistic.

Certainly in the matter of education the Constitution grants no power to Congress to nationalize it, as would be the effect, indirectly, of this bill. From the beginning education was regarded as a local, state, and private concern. In the convention of 1787 were men of learning and refinement. Nothing could have been more agreeable to their taste than the granting of the widest powers to the federal government to disseminate, supervise and even standardize education. And one of them, Madison, did propose a resolution looking somewhat to this end, which was not adopted. Their profound conviction was that the control of education should be left to the jurisdiction of private, local, and state authorities. The Constitution therefore contains no provision on the subject.

This silence however has never been interpreted as hostile to the cause of education. The government throughout our history has been helpful and sympathetic. The ordinance for the government of the Northwest Territory, passed in 1787, contains these words: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." The history of federal legislation in the aid of education shows (1) that lands and the proceeds of the sale of lands have been given in aid of such institutions and (2)

that bureaus and agencies have been created for the gathering and diffusion of useful information upon subjects affecting the general welfare, free to all who might desire it. At the present time the Department of Agriculture operates in such ways as the Forest Service, Weather Bureau, Bureau of Mines, Chemistry, Soils, Public Roads, Animal and Plant Industry, Home Economics, and others. In the Department of the Treasury we have the Health Bureau. In the Department of the Interior is included the Bureau of Education. In the Department of Commerce we have the Bureaus of Census, Fisheries, Standards, and Navigation. In the Department of Labor is included the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Woman's and Children's Bureau. These do not exhaust the list of agencies by which the government investigates and reports on subjects of vital interest to the nation. There are scores of them in the various departments. Reference is made to them to show that the government has been consistently sympathetic and generous toward education, both of a technical and general character. But it has always steered clear of the idea that education was a proper function of the national government. In the spirit of the Constitution it is not such a proper function. And it is just that doctrine of our law which is endangered by such measures as the Sterling-Reed Bill, which by subsidy and indirection make education a function of the government.

Notice how the degree of federal control has increased mostly in recent years. Up to the year 1914 the policy of control was consistent with our tradition, but in that year the government made a radical departure from its policy in the passing of the Smith-Lever Act. This was an Act in the interest of agricultural extension. We had always been interested in the education of farmers, as also in artisans and engineers. And there is no doubt that the government's generous aid to agricultural and mechanical colleges in all the States, since the passage of

the first Morrill Act in 1862, has been entirely beneficial. It has helped to make education more democratic in its ideals, and it has changed the ideals of universities and colleges from those of culture for its own sake into culture for public service.

One of the aims of the Education Bill is "the equalization of educational opportunity for all the children of the land." That reads well, but under that pleasant phrase lurks the possibility of the complete standardization of education in America, something after the manner of the German Empire. Do we want to Prussianize our schools? Do we want a "standard education," approved at Washington, out of the same books, the same ideals, the same chalk and blackboards? In what pedagogy have we learned that it is wise, or even possible, to give the same sort of education to every child in the United States? What reason have we for believing that such a system of nationalization would be desirable? Is it possible to pour into the same mould the children of the South, of the North, of the East, and of the West? Is it scientific to attempt it? The glory of this country is its variety. To its variety we owe a great deal of its vitality. The sort of education which would fit one section would not fit another. A system which meets the requirements of one part of the population would not meet the requirements of another. A type of school which would stimulate one group of States would be deadening to another group. Education is a "creative interest." To flourish it must have freedom. And even if the bill in question became a law, the objection would still remain that standardizing education kills it. The principle on which the bill would operate is unsound and unscientific. For nothing kills initiative like conformity. State education, which always inevitably becomes bureaucratized and rigid cannot produce a vital citizenship. It is a machine which reproduces after its kind—machine-made men and women. It is inelastic and throttled by the fear of free-

dom and experimentation. It cannot fit into the complexities and varieties of human nature. And the bill in question would tend, if it became a law, to give the country a mechanistic education. And its great fault is that in the end it would not serve, but injure, the "general welfare." Democracy has been called a "leavening," but it is not a "leveling." In education, as in politics, its hope remains in liberty under law. And the nation might well insist, before it be too late, that the Sterling-Reed Bill be defeated, and that education be left where the founders of the nation left it, in the care of State and local jurisdictions.

Another objection to the bill is that it is based upon a wrong assumption. It is assumed that the States will not deal progressively and adequately with their problems of education and that therefore the Federal Government must intervene and interfere. No doubt there is backwardness in certain States. No doubt not all is being done that might be done to improve the educational systems. But in view of the dangerous features of this bill which offers aid from the central treasury the cure would add worse miseries than those we suffer. It is not sound to plead that because a State has mismanaged education within its borders therefore the Federal Government should take control. One might as justly plead that the States should take charge of the postal service because the Federal Government has sometimes mismanaged it. The way to promote the cause of education is "not with federal control but with better State control." And this can be brought to pass by information and stimulation and expert counsel, in surer and safer fashion than by subsidy and dictation as proposed.

Another objection to the bill is that it encourages blind faith in government to do anything it wants to do and do it well. But governments, even our own, do not do all things well. Ours did not manage its oil fields wisely. It did not manage its Veterans' Bureau with too much credit. There is too much looking to the government to

get things done, and not enough of local enterprise and initiative. And measures like the one before us are often speedily acclaimed as cure-alls, as though the government had a magic power to solve all problems if the people only gave it larger powers. It is this illusion which leads to such proposals as those contained in the Sterling-Reed Bill, which win for them speedy popular approval, and which in the long run will destroy democracy and set up an imperialistic state. This childish reliance on government to work wonders in our interest is responsible for the growth of bureauracy in recent years. Our federal government now has 590,000 officers, chiefs, agents, and employees. With inconsiderate action, such as the bill in question, we have kept on adding to the structure of government. We are fast moving toward the time when we shall have no longer a Federal Union of States, inhabited by people who are able and eager to manage their own affairs, citizens of a great Republic, but we shall have an imperial government, and we shall be subjects of it and not its citizens, our initiative destroyed, our sense of responsibility gone, our democracy taken away.

Another objection to the bill is the sort of "leadership" it provides. It is not the leadership in education which the cause requires. It is the leadership of law and subsidy, of card indexes and reports and "red tape." There is nothing vital in such a service to the cause of education. A great department of this sort would discourage natural leaders. It would take away local responsibility and initiative. Nor would the "Council" provided for in Section 17, of about one hundred educators and laymen "to consult and advise with the Secretary" do any good. Instead of supplying "leadership" such a body would much more likely supply division of opinion and dissension.

Lastly, the effect of the bill, if it became a law, would pave the way to a paternal imperialism in education. This would be contrary to our philosophy of government. This would be antagonistic to our traditions of individual

freedom and local self-government. The Republic was founded on the principle of the "concrete universal." The nation is an indestructible Union of indestructible sovereign States. The effect of such laws is to obliterate the States in the interest of the central government. They tend to change our system and style of government.

The great need of the country is not more education, but more education of a better kind. The vast scheme outlined in the bill does not touch the heart of the problem of education in America. That problem is to educate the conscience of the people. For this purpose Christian schools have been built and fostered. And their influence has profoundly aided and uplifted the standards of education. All these Christian schools and colleges are put in danger by such an Act as is proposed, because of its tremendous emphasis on public education and its value as the one and only great corrective for all the ills we mourn. By retaining the present Bureau of Education, and possibly by improving and enriching its service to all the schools alike, public and private, the cause of education will be much better served than by enacting into law the Sterling-Reed Bill, which is out of harmony with our traditions, dangerous to our liberties, hostile to the highest interests of education, expensive, unscientific, unnecessary, and in the end, impotent to achieve the purposes for which it has been framed.

### EDUCATION BILL<sup>7</sup>

The present Curtis-Reed bill has its inception in the Smith-Towner bill of 1918, which was plainly written and openly pronounced as a measure for the Federal control of education. The proponents of the present, as the then

<sup>7</sup> From memorandum by Charles J. Tobin, representing and appearing for the Cathedral Academy, Albany, N.Y., and the numerous private and parochial Catholic schools in the State of New York. United States Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 380-9. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.



(1918) bill, is the National Educational Association, and their public explanation of the purposes and intents of the bill is found in the announcement of Miss Charl Williams, legislative secretary, who stated as follows before the 1925 meeting of said association:

There is a general understanding among educators that Federal aid will be deferred. Our bill in the last several sessions of Congress has been a double-headed one. We have decided it is better to make progress in the one direction that is now open. It is inconceivable that the National Education Association will ever give up the idea of the extension of Federal aid to education.

Federal aid must and does mean control, so the bill in its present language is only a subterfuge. The real purpose and plan of its proponents is as the wedge or means of entry for federalization of education. There is no public demand for the legislation, rather the entire opinion favoring the bill has been manufactured by a politico-educational machine known as the N. E. A., employing a high-salaried group of lobbyists whose openly expressed aims are to make education a Federal function, if legally possible, and place themselves in control of the department so created.

It should be here stated that the measures enacted during war time pertaining to special subjects of education should not be used as an argument for the establishment of a Cabinet officer of education, because such agencies were necessary agencies in the war, and no good citizen would dare to attack the need for them in their enactment.

The various States spend \$2,000,000,000 each year for schools. Each State, too, has its own secretary of education—superintendent of public instruction. A national secretary could only mean an officer to control the State secretaries. If not that, the whole scheme is fanciful, mere empty honor, and would profit nothing to the schools of the country and likewise would not satisfy the N. E. A. propagandists who are working for and

who will demand the numerous jobs to be created under the present bill.

There is no exact parallel between the Departments of Agriculture and Labor and the theory underlying the proposed department of education. In the first place, said departments do not control or attempt to control agriculture or labor. Neither are they asking for high subsidies to dole out to their friends. They are research and news-gathering organizations. The Government already possesses such an organization for education—that is the Federal Bureau of Education.

The statement of the purposes and arguments for the bill as given by the National Education Association, proponents of the bill, dated February, 1926, prove conclusively that the present bill is not to dignify education by a place in the President's Cabinet, but rather to obtain under a well-conceived plan the control of education in the United States through a department of education with a secretary in the Cabinet, backed by the resources of our Nation.

Some of the said purposes and arguments are as follows:

State and local school officers desire and greatly need the assistance a department of education would render.

A department of education would stimulate educational effort in all parts of the country.

The importance as a matter of national concern justifies the creation of a department of education.

Public education has come to be a national question.

Only a department of education can hope to command adequate financial support.

Only a department of education can hope to command the prestige essential to the successful development of those educational functions the Federal Government should exercise.

Only a department of education can secure the prompt consideration of the findings of educational research essential to educational progress.

The educational work that a department of education would conduct has not been and can not be successfully carried on by State and local school systems.

State and local school systems can not command the necessary resources.

The principal purpose of the measure is to provide an agency to collect facts and to conduct research to aid the several States in establishing and maintaining more efficient schools.

Education has steadily increased in national importance. No single interest is of greater importance to the Nation's future welfare.

United States Commissioner of Education, J. J. Tigert, stated on February 24, 1926:

It is not so significant whether this educational unit is called a bureau or department of education or whether the head of it is called a bureau chief or Cabinet secretary as it is that there shall be a continual development of efficient service by this agency as a clearing house for education.

Our view is:

A national department of education could not but insist on national standards of education, standards developed in an armchair, out of all relation to local needs, purposes, situations, and possibilities of accomplishment. Education is not like agriculture or commerce, in which it is possible, and even desirable at times, to insist on a standard type of output. Children are neither animals nor machines; and the schools can not turn out standardized children like an automobile factory turns out standard cars. Education is a life. As such, it is essentially a matter of experimentation. There is no other way to learn what we must hold on to and what we must reject. Since education is experiment, it is local experiment, for no other kind is possible. Local school boards and teachers know local needs and can make local experiments. An educational bureaucracy at Washington can not be expected to understand what each community needs or wants. Its influence then would be in the direction of

discouraging local initiative or of deterring local educators from doing what they realize should be done.

All of this, of course, is not a matter of theory. Political history is filled with examples of the disastrous consequences which follow upon schemes of centralized education. It is theory to contend that a department of education would, if established, encourage and stimulate education.

The schools are now and always have been administered locally. This is scarcely the time to substitute a foreign scheme of education for our American system, one that has worked to general satisfaction. The American school is a local effort, not a national burden. It should have local support, guidance, and control. It does not need and should not have Federal control.

The growing tendency on the part of Congress to consider education as a national problem and the desire of a well-organized minority to formulate a national educational policy, inspired the more recent legislation which vests a greater degree of control in the Federal Government. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 did not directly effect the regularly organized work of educational institutions, and, therefore, was not identified as an important educational measure. It was important, however, because it was the embodiment of a new scheme in congressional education legislation. The scheme provided for State participation in financing educational programs suggested by Congress and Federal participation in the formulation of plans for carrying out such programs. The Smith-Hughes Act (1917) and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, both provide for a fund to be distributed among the States and before a State can receive its allotment, under either of these acts, the Federal Government must have approved the plans of the State with respect to the type of work contemplated, qualification of teachers, and equipment. Obviously, this gives the final determination in matters of such specialized education into the hands of

the Federal Government. The present bill with the enactments of the Smith-Lever Act and the Smith-Hughes Act would enable the Federal Government to carry out its policies in the general field of elementary education in the same way that it has in the more specialized fields of secondary and higher education and would thus establish Federal control to a degree hitherto untried.

It is now proposed to bureaucratize and to bring into uniformity the educational system of the whole United States, while making the most solemn assurance that nothing of the kind is intended. The glory and the success of education in the United States are due to its freedom, to its unevenness, to its reflection of the needs and ambitions and capacities of local communities, and to its being kept in close and constant touch with the people themselves. There is not enough money in the United States, even if every dollar of it were expended on education, to produce by Federal authority or through what is naively called cooperation between the Federal Government and the several States, educational results that would be at all comparable with those that have already been reached under the free and natural system that has grown up among us. If tax-supported education be first encouraged and inspected and then little by little completely controlled by central authority, European experience demonstrates and proves conclusively what will happen.

Local self-government has always been "the most effective spur to political interest, and the bulwark of political and civil freedom." (Ashley's *American Federal State*, p. 201.)

Once more to tap the Federal Treasury under guise of aiding the States, and once more to establish an army of bureaucrats in Washington and another army of inspectors roaming at large throughout the land, will not only fail to accomplish any permanent improvement in the education of our people but it will assist in effecting

so great a revolution in our American form of government as one day to endanger its perpetuity.

There is no authority or sanction whatsoever for the proposed bill in the Constitution. This was directly passed on and plainly stated, and it is the ruling and controlling law to-day reported in *U. S. v. Boyer* (85 Federal 425, p. 430), which opinion, in parts, reads as follows:

We must therefore look to the Constitution to find the power for the authority of Congress to enact any legislation. Nor will any degree of respect for that great legislative body supply the place of the power if it is not to be found in the Constitution. It need not be found in any one power, but if "nonenumerated," or a "resulting power" flowing from the general purposes of the Government, still it must be found somewhere in the Constitution or it does not exist and should not be claimed.

### MENACE OF BILL<sup>8</sup>

While a most objectionable feature of the former educational bills has been omitted from the bill now under consideration, namely, the proposal to grant Federal aid to the States for educational purposes, I candidly admit that the new bill, which essays to create a department of education with all that it includes, spells for me and many others great possibilities of danger.

Would not the enactment of this bill into law necessarily bring the subject of education into politics? The head of the department, being a political appointee to a term for only four years, would not the danger be great that our educational policies would be ever changing? Would the passing of this measure not afford constituents a most desirable opportunity to importune our legislators to reward them for services rendered by appointing them to some position in the national educational service, just as is the case to-day in the post office, internal revenue, and prohibition enforcement services? But

<sup>8</sup> From statement of Rev. F. J. Lankenau, Napoleon, Ohio. United States Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 405-10. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.

would it not be most deplorable if the patronage of the proposed Department of Education should be used in the interest of the political power that might be in power? I know that the proponents of this bill regard this as an impossible contingency, a "straw-man", but to use this eventuality of drawing education into politics is a very strong probability, to say the least, if not even an inevitability, viewed in the light of past events. Legislators, men of business and professional men have expressed their fears again and again along these lines.

We opponents of this bill also fear that a secretary of education, if he should be an educator, would feel out of place in the President's Cabinet. The original idea of the Cabinet was that it should be made up of heads of only a few departments of Government under the direct control of the President. Gradually, however, the Cabinet developed into a body of statemen serving in a dual capacity. Their main purpose, as I take it, being to serve as an advisory council to the President and helping him to lay down the broad lines of policy; but also directing, through experts, in accordance with the general policies of the administration, the business of the Government as it concerned their respective departments. In recent years a number of bureaus of the Department of the Interior have been raised to the dignity of departments, with the result that departments which as bureaus had experts at their head, now have chiefs who are chosen because of their ability to advise the President in matters of state. The supporters of the bill might tell us that it is very questionable whether the head of the proposed department of education would be an educator, for if the general rule observed in the appointment to the Cabinet would be observed in this instance, the appointment would not go to an expert educator but to a layman. And even if the position should be offered a prominent educator, it is highly improbable that he would be willing to give up a permanent, influential position of college president or city

school superintendent for the very limited tenure of office that would be his as secretary of education.

However, who would lend greater dignity to the cause of education and who would serve it more efficiently, a secretary of education who would be a layman, or a commissioner of education who would be an expert educator?

It is claimed that the dignity of education demands that it have representation in the Cabinet. When it is a question of recognizing the dignity and importance of education, I refuse to stand second to any one. But the high esteem I have for education by no means induces me to claim that it should be represented in the Cabinet. I know of nothing that can be its peer in dignity, and yet I should deplore nothing more than to see my people so far forget the principles of Americanism as to demand a secretary of religion with a seat in the Presidential Cabinet.

We give education due recognition in our country, though we have no secretary of education. There is no land under the sun where education enters more into the woof and web of a people than in our country. Education will gain no more dignity by being represented in the Cabinet. It will be honored and respected, just in proportion as its representatives are sincere, faithful, and efficient. The greatest and most honored leaders in the history of education have possibly in some instances held official positions, but more often not. Comenius and Francke, Rousseau and Pestalozzi, Herbart and Spencer were all men without official positions, and yet they are stars of the first magnitude in the educational heavens.

It is claimed that this bill proposes to bring about the consolidation of Federal educational agencies which could not be done through the development of the present Bureau of Education. By examining the measure we find that section 3 would transfer to the proposed department of education the Federal Board for Vocational Education,



the Columbia Institute, and Howard University; section 7 creates a Federal conference of education consisting of a representative from each department of the Government; section 8 provides for the collection of educational statistics and facts, as well as general educational research work; section 9 directs that the results of the department's research and investigations be made accessible to all interested in them; section 10 provides for an annual report to Congress and for special investigations which Congress or the President may request.

In all candor I can not see why not each and every power here granted the proposed department of education can not be equally well exercised by the present Bureau of Education. That such could be accomplished by the development of the Bureau of Education was apparently the serious conviction of the chairman of the Committee of Education of the House of the Sixty-eighth Congress, the Hon. Mr. Dallinger, when he introduced his H. R. 6582 in the first session of last Congress.

It is claimed that the adequate financial support of all the work delegated in the educational bill to the proposed department of education demands that it be presented by one of no less rank than that of a member of the Cabinet to those who have the making of the National Budget in hand; but should that actually be true? Can it be said in truth that the men who make up the National Budget are respecters of persons to such an extent that the position occupied by the man who presents the need, rather than the need itself is with them the deciding factor in the admission of an item on the budget? I prefer to answer this unhesitatingly in the negative; I prefer to believe that with us it still holds good that right rather than might wins the day and that among us a cause is still won because it is just and not by influence of persons.

The supporters of the present bill when acting as the champions of its predecessors made much of an alleged crisis in the educational situation of our country. It was

claimed that we were among the most illiterate people in the world, that illiteracy was growing at an alarming rate, that public education was not supported as it should be in a number of States, and that some of the States were not conducting their schools at all properly. However, as these points are not stressed at this time, I shall not discuss them here, though I am convinced that it should not be a difficult matter to bring proof that statistics show that there is no ground for such fears and apprehensions.

But the main objection is that the enactment of this bill into law would be the first step toward Federal control of our schools. That this is no idle fear, statements by supporters of the measure show. In a statement made by Doctor Strayer in the pamphlet mentioned in my opening paragraph we find these two sentences on page 10: "If the scientific inquiries undertaken by the department of education should clearly indicate that the Nation should furnish a larger degree of support for education, the question for providing this support would still rest with Congress. If the people of the United States become convinced of the desirability of a larger degree of national support for education, they will secure the appropriate legislation." This statement shows that though Federal subsidy has been omitted from this bill, it has not been lost sight of by any means. That Federal subsidy for the local schools is the thing hoped for by the proponents of this bill is also plain from the admission of Doctor Strayer on page 4 of his pamphlet: "Whatever point of view one may take with regard to the national responsibility for the support of education, it is certainly true that there is little, if any, prospect of action by the next Congress in support of further Federal aid for education." This holds out strong hope that the following Congress may do what this one would not do, grant the subsidy.

But even without a subsidy ever becoming a reality,

the establishment of a department of education would surely lead to the Federal control of our schools. I quote what I have written elsewhere:

Experience and common sense teach us that the influence which the secretary of education as a cabinet member would enjoy, owing to patronage and other favors at his disposal, would inevitably make him supreme; and without coercion or seeming interference on his part he could easily establish any policy he saw fit.

But the nationalizing of education in our country would mean its eventually becoming the creature of an educational autocracy. There is a growing tendency in our educational system to deprive our parents of their rights to initiative and teachers of a voice in determining curriculum, program, and method. A Federal education bill, having the features of the proposed bill, will do much to strengthen this growing tendency of the times and make our school system a standardized, machine-made routine with all the details of application ready to use. The craving for uniformity may become so inordinate that to question the advisability or practicability of directions given by superiors, or to fail to carry them out, might possibly mean that a charge of disloyalty would be lodged against the unlucky teacher who has originality enough to see where a modification of the prescribed program might mean an improvement. This stifling of professional initiative and interest surely would be most deplorable and wholly contrary to our American ideals. Even if the nationalization of education should give our schools greater efficiency, we never could afford to gain it at the cost of such a great sacrifice. Liberty-loving Americans should consider well before they introduce a system of education with an autocratic bureaucracy and all its blighting consequences, even though the proposed system holds out strong promises of increased efficiency. Bureaucracy always has certain objectionable characteristics and properties. It is always inquisitive, heavy-handed, slow to do good and quick in the commission of wrong.

Hitherto public opinion has largely reflected the sense of the Federal Constitution in holding that the right to supervise and control the education of the child is a natural prerogative of the parents. State monopoly of education has generally been regarded as objectionable and undesirable, because it invades the inalienable rights of parents and sets up a control for which there is no warrant. Private as well as public schools, for this reason, have been encouraged and protected. Though until the decision handed down by Justice McReynolds of the Federal Supreme Court in the *Ohio, Nebraska, and Iowa language cases* (June 4, 1923), no court of our country had ever held that parents had the natural right to control the education of their children, this right has never been seriously nor directly questioned, excepting in Oregon and Michigan, and parents accord-

ingly have exercised their liberty again and again in founding and maintaining private schools for their offspring.

However, the opinion that education is primarily and fundamentally the right of the State is gaining more and more ground in our country. Not the parents, but the civil power, it is held, should dictate the education of the child. And, strange to say, this utterly socialistic doctrine poses itself as true Americanism, though it is surely utterly subversive of all genuine democracy when an educator writes, "My child is first a national child. He belongs to the Nation before he belong to himself." However little this learned gentleman may realize it, in expressing this sentiment, he plainly shows that the virus of sovietism has thoroughly poisoned his judgment. Let this opinion once prevail, and the flood-gates of socialism will have been fully opened. Let education once become nationalized, as a result of this view; let course of study and textbook, teacher and method once be dependent upon the State and the head of a department posing as the State, and we shall have purely played into the hands of the bolshevist. Herein lies the greatest danger of a Federal education bill, that it establishes Federal control of education, next to religion the greatest factor in the shaping of persons' thoughts and conduct, and delivers the child during the most receptive years of life tooth and nail into the hands of teachers who are the servants of a political bureaucracy centralized at Washington. Verily, if one were casting about for a swift and certain means to destroy American freedom, no more adequate machinery of destruction can be conceived than a school system with a virtual autocrat at its head.

A former high official of our Government gives expression to his fears of increasing tendency among us toward centralization thus: "It is truly bolshevistic when the education of the country shall be conducted from Washington. Yet such is the manifest purpose of the present time. When Washington takes charge of the mother before the baby is born, stands sponsor for it when it makes its advent into this world, decrees its exercises and says when it must eat, prescribes its studies, and looks after its health during the school age, it will be high time to invite Lenin and Trotsky to tour America and offer criticism of our institutions." The virus of sovietism is apparently spreading and every legitimate means should be used to counteract its pernicious influence by an earnest and persistent effort to show our people the deep menace that lies in the usurpation of parental rights, or those of the local community. The insidious doctrine that the State is supreme, the source of all rights and the authority in all matters of duty, is fatal to the perpetuation of our present democratic form of government and inevitably leads to socialism and sovietism. If a halt is not called in the present tendency of legislation, the fundamental principles upon which our Government rests will be completely destroyed and a tyrannical bureaucracy will be created at Washington—quietly, creepingly, persistently created—"which in time will know no master."

We submit that the enactment of a Federal education bill, such as is proposed, into law would exert a pernicious influence upon the morale of our American people. What the noted French historian, De Tocqueville, wrote years ago of his own country we should do well to heed: "The Government having assumed the place of Providence, it was natural that everyone should invoke its aid in his individual necessities." The warning of John Stuart Mill is likewise in place: "The mischief begins when, instead of calling forth the activities and powers of individuals and bodies, government substitutes its own activity for theirs." Several years ago President Harding spoke these earnest words: "The one outstanding danger of to-day is the tendency to turn to Washington for the things which are the tasks and the duties of the 48 Commonwealths which constitute the Nation." A United States Senator has well said: "America will be happiest and the Union more secure, if our governmental policies are such as to encourage individual initiative and self-government." It is in the same spirit that President Coolidge speaks when he says; "Demand has grown up for a greater concentration of powers in the Federal Government. If we fairly consider it, we must conclude that the remedy would be worse than the disease."

A people is strong and virile in proportion to its willingness to assume the responsibilities of citizenship and remains appreciative of the exalted dignity and obligations laid upon them as members of a democracy. We must, therefore, do all we can to prevent the increasing desire of our people to look to the Government for everything. When once the people of Rome learned to expect their government to provide them with bread and amusements, the old spirit of independence and the ancient love of liberty were things of the past. There are strong indications of weakness apparent in our people to-day. If we let them continue to shirk their duties and responsibilities by transferring these to the Federal Government, the time will come when our Government will collapse and fall into the hands of despots, since a democratic government will never be stronger than the people upon whom it is built.

Finally, we can not but see a menace in this proposed bill to the private and parochial schools of our country. The enactment of the bill under consideration into law is bound to result in a greater degree of Federal influence of the schools. Increased regulation is an anticipated result of the proposed legislation. But increased regulation will mean ultimate exclusive operation by the State. Standardization of the school curricula is also anticipated as a result of this enactment into law; but increased standardization would result in the natural loss of pres-

tige of those schools which did not conform to the prevailing standardized system. The schools that did not belong to the regular recognized machinery of organization would soon lose prestige. Organized curricula would more and more overshadow in importance sincerity and thoroughness, with the results that private and parochial schools, no matter how thorough their work, would sink in the estimation of the people, because they did not conform to the standardized courses of study.

But the private schools of our country, elementary and higher, have made very important contributions to the training of our citizenship; and their destruction, therefore, would be a most deplorable calamity. Our first schools and colleges were private institutions, and even to-day among our most influential schools, colleges, and universities are those directed by private corporations. A governmental system of education has a natural tendency to uniformity, as every observer will be ready to admit, and such uniformity will soon degenerate into stagnation and ossification if not checked. State monopoly of education, which would eliminate all competition and all private initiative, therefore, would be opposed to all the best educational interests of our country. Private schools, just because they are unhampered by a central machinery of control and just because of their consequent nonconformity to any particular existing "system," make for educational progress; since progress in everything depends upon freedom and nonconformity—upon the courage of daring to be different.

Now, the history of educational progress shows that just our private schools and colleges, by daring to be different, by having the courage and the opportunity to leave the beaten path of existing methods and systems, have always exerted a wholesome influence on our national educational life. The history of education in general shows that the leaders in educational reforms and progress have in most instances been connected with private

institutions of learning. And it is perfectly natural that this should be the case, because that freedom, variety, and elasticity which may be found in private schools can not be countenanced, for obvious reasons, in a school that is under government control. The impalpable, but nevertheless powerful influences that make for standard results in the school that is under State aid and control, if not checked, will tend to destroy freedom and variety. All schools under government management must contend with the evils which result from those mechanical uniformities which educational authorities necessarily impose, even though the imposition is often unconscious and unintentional. In the nature of things, the common school must remain standardized and can not admit of experimentation. That is the function of the private school. Out of the private school must come the new growth that must then be transplanted to the common garden.

For these reasons I can not refrain from expressing my well-founded fears that the end desired by the proponents of this bill, be it ever so exalted, does not, and never can, justify the use the dangerous experiment proposed.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST CURTIS-REED BILL<sup>9</sup>

The reasons why this bill should not be enacted into legislation, in brief, are as follows:

The proposed measure is—

1. Unwise. Many sincere students of our Government think that we have too many Federal departments already. A new and uncalled-for department is unwise. As President Coolidge says, the Federal Government should confine itself strictly to its constitutional functions.

<sup>9</sup> From statement of Rev. Jones I. Corrigan, S.J., professor of government, Boston College. United States. Congress. Committee on Education and Labor. Proposed department of education: hearings on S. 291 and H.R. 5000. p. 378-9. 69th Congress, 1st Session. February, 1926.

2. Unnecessary. The present Bureau of Education, enlarged in object and scope, is ample for every provision in the Curtis-Reed bill. The bill fails to establish the need of a secretary. Every power which it enunciates could be exercised equally well by the existing Commissioner of Education.

3. Dishonest. The bill is a misleading "compromise." Its true purpose is the same as the old Smith-Towner bill and its successors. The authors of the old and the new bills are the same. The forces which support them and the bills are the same. The ultimate purpose of each bill is one and the same, and that purpose is Federal control, toward which this "compromise" is the first step. They have changed their methods but not their purposes, and some of them are frank enough to admit it.

A Federal department of education is—

4. Undesirable. We have 48 ministers of education already, one in every State, and a Bureau of Education at Washington. In addition, we have thousands of local school-board members, city and county superintendents, and associates. If the pooled wisdom of all these officials is unable to devise a workable school system, the case is hopeless.

5. Inefficient. Ultimately the alleged reasons for the bill rest on the theory that Congress is better fitted to meet the needs of the local schools than the people of the communities in which the schools are situated; or that a department at Washington has some magic formula, unknown to educators at large, which will forthwith bring the schools to perfection. Each theory is a pure assumption. The bungling, inefficiency, and waste of existing Federal bureaus should be sufficient warning against setting up another, especially in education. To keep the schools efficient, keep them out of politics, national as well as local.

6. Too costly. The new bill eliminates Federal appropriations; but since it is supported by men and women



who a few years ago said that the very heart of the plan was Federal "aid" to the States, it is proper to conclude that they are only waiting for the opportunity, once the department is established, to amend the bill to include a Federal slush fund. That is exactly what happened in the case of the Children's Bureau. Originally founded as an agency to collect statistics, within a few years it increased its appropriations by nearly 6,000 per cent and added unto itself, through the Sheppard-Towner maternity act, a department to parcel out money to the States on the 50-50 plan, condemned by President Coolidge, for the teaching of hygiene maternity.

At a time when national economy is the Nation's greatest need, it is too costly a folly to erect a new department of education whose expenses in a few years will vie with the Army and Navy. Congressman Towner himself said that the expenses of a Federal department of education would run into the billions. High salaries for another army of Federal officials is a waste of the taxpayers' money.

Finally, the creation of a Federal department of education must be wholly unacceptable to all Americans interested in breaking the growing trend toward Federal bureaucracy, and in preserving the American principle of local communities governing themselves in all matters reserved to them by the Constitution. Under the Constitution, the administration as well as the control of the schools is vested in the States and forbidden to Congress. The States can care for their educational functions without the aid of Congress. They have done so for generations. Congress, on the other hand, will always have quite enough to do in managing its own business, without meddling in business which does not concern it. The States after all must be kept indestructible as well as the Union. Next to Federal control of religion, the worst of all bureaucracies is centralized control of the schools, the ultimate purpose of the Curtis-Reed bill for a Federal department of education.





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